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DECEMBER 1988

Vol. 10 No. 12



CHRISTMAS PAST

In this Christmas issue, we offer reminiscences from around the region and hope that our writers and readers have shared memories that mean something special to everyone. **PAGE 20**

COVER PHOTO BY MICHAEL SAUNDERS



FICTION

A short story by Leo McKay Jr. reminds us that the Christmas season isn't always warm and nostalgic in our imperfect society. **PAGE 16**



FOOD

A festive dinner featuring goose is suggested as a change from traditional turkey; the savoury trimmings make it almost irresistible. **PAGE 32**



WINTER OUTDOORS

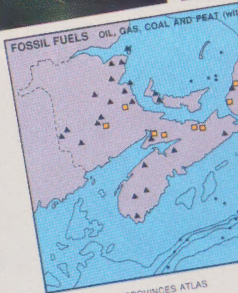
When the Christmas excitement dies down, there's time for recreation — and that might be downhill or cross-country skiing, skating or maybe birdwatching. Read all about winter activities in the special section. **PAGE 37**

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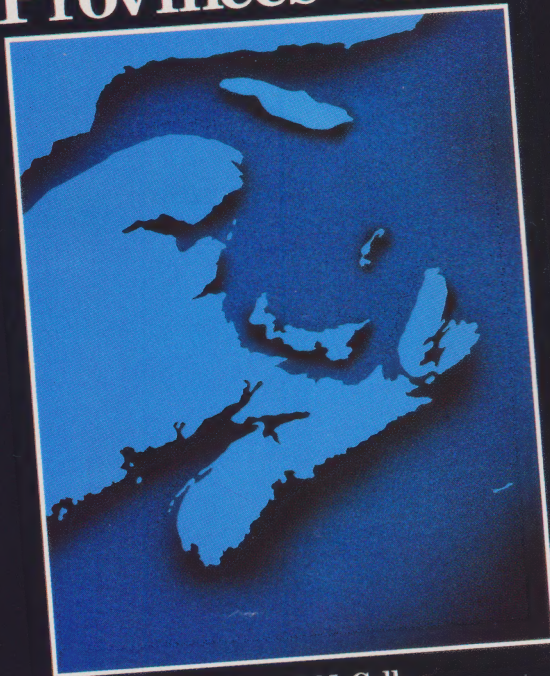
GEOLOGY PLATE 4

Geological features	Million years before present	Geological period	Rock type
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	1-15	QUATERNARY	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	15-140	GLACIAL	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	140-195	JURASSIC	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	195-230	TRIASSIC	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	230-250	PERMIAN	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	250-345	DEVONIAN	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	345-405	DEVONIAN	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	405-425	DEVONIAN	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	425-470	DEVONIAN	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	470-540	DEVONIAN	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	540-570	DEVONIAN	Sedimentary
Recent glaciation covered the entire province of the Maritime Provinces.	570-590	DEVONIAN	Sedimentary



10 THE MARITIME PROVINCES ATLAS

The Maritime Provinces Atlas



Robert J. McCalla

GEOLOGY OF THE MARITIME PROVINCES



PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY 11

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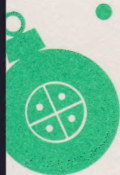
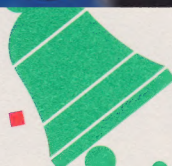
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PUBLISHER'S LETTER

Clear-eyed vision in print

I've been a fan of Harry Bruce and his writing long before I knew anything about the man. This is a special Christmas when it comes to the writing Bruces and I'd like to share the story of the bit part I've been able to play in all of this.

As you probably know, Harry grew up in Toronto. His father Charles had moved there to work as a journalist for Canadian Press. In the mid-1960s, Harry wrote a series of newspaper columns describing walks through city neighbourhoods under the byline of Max Macpherson. Those articles were later collected and published in a book, under the title *The Short Happy Walks of Max Macpherson*.

Time passed, Harry moved to the Maritimes, worked as a journalist and became the founding editor of *Atlantic Insight*.

I don't know when it was that I learned about Harry's father, a distinguished journalist in his own right, who grew up in Nova Scotia, attended university at Mount Allison, made a name for himself and then went to Toronto. Charles Bruce was a novelist and poet as well as a journalist. I heard people make references to his best-known novel, *The Channel Shore*. I had the impression that he was a worthy Nova Scotia writer, one of the old-fashioned writers who used to enjoy great popularity with the reading public and whose day had passed by.

Skip forward now a few years and I am on a trip which has taken me to Winnipeg where I grew up. Scheduled to leave one day, for some reason the arrangements change and I find myself with an evening to spend at my parents' home. Expecting me to be gone, they are out and I am looking around for something to read.

There on a shelf, in a collection of hardcover books from the 1950s, I see a copy of *The Channel Shore* by Charles Bruce.

The pace of the book is measured. The first pages reminded me somewhat of the pace of Ernest Buckler's books. I was startled at how well the written word follows the spoken language of Nova Scotians. As I became acquainted with the characters of the community (a fictional version of Port Shoreham, where Charles grew up and Harry now lives) I was fascinated with how their lives were intertwined and how they deal with the conflicting pulls of home, family and community — and progress, big cities and wealth.

I read it until late that night, read it most of the next day on the trip back to

Halifax and kept on reading until I finished it. I thought it was a wonderful book, every bit the equal of Ernest Buckler or any other Maritime writer, as impressive as Margaret Laurence or Sinclair Ross.

I began talking about *The Channel Shore* to people who I thought would know it. Everybody did know it. But, astonishingly, almost no one had read it. I got the impression that everyone else was in the same situation I had been in; they knew it was worthy, but they didn't think it was the kind of book worth going out of your way to seek out and read. An honourable, regional, retired classic.

Some months later I happened to fall into conversation with the person sitting next to me on a plane on another trip. It turned out he was a professor of English at Dalhousie. He mentioned that he was just putting the finishing touches on a biography of Charles Bruce. He wasn't sure when it would be published, he was sending it off to McGill-Queen's University Press since they have an interest in the Maritimes and like literary biographies.

The professor's name was Andy Wainwright, and I told him about my chance encounter with *The Channel Shore*. I asked him to send me his manuscript. From it, I learned about Charles Bruce's life story, why it was that a promising novelist and poet left the Maritimes and went to Toronto to work, how he spent literally years working in the evenings on his novel, how *The Channel Shore* was very well received when it was published in the 1950s, but lost the Governor General's award that year when the judges gave the prize to ex-Soviet cipher clerk turned novelist Igor Gouzenko.

It was natural for me as a Maritime book publisher to decide to publish Andy Wainwright's biography of Charles Bruce. We also decided to publish a new edition of *The Channel Shore* itself. Both are now out.

These plans having been made, it was an unexpected surprise to learn that there would be a third Bruce book this fall, Harry's own volume *Down Home*. Knowing Charles Bruce from his biography and his novel, Harry's work as a writer is clearly a continuation of the tradition established by his father. The son, like the father, honours and celebrates the people, the communities, the heritage and the way of life of this part of Canada. Their vision is clear-eyed, but loyal.

This is a wonderful year for books of all kinds, and I'm delighted to have been able to add Charles Bruce to the list of 1988 Maritime authors.

— James Lorimer



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FEEDBACK

Fans of Stan the Man

Finally, someone has realized that Stan Johnson, *Just an ordinary guy* (Oct.'88), is number one with kids and adults alike. I am a 15-year-old Nova Scotian girl...I feel sorry for CBC...my only regret is that I can't get MITV.

Stacy Tibbo
Liscomb, Guys. Co., N.S.

...Stan Johnson was able to draw... 209,000 every Sunday morning! I wonder if Mr. Johnson ever gave consideration to becoming a Sunday School teacher.

Jean S. Forbes
Ottawa, Ont.

Provincial Reports: good and bad

A ray of sunshine. A breath of fresh air. A place in this world where learning disabled children can meet with success, *Mastering the basics to succeed in the mainstream* (Oct.'88)...

The Dark Ages in education are alive and well in New Brunswick...such children are viewed as less deserving of an education than others. A one-size-fits-all curriculum is the accepted norm... Thank you for the wonderful success story and the beam of light at the end of a long dark tunnel.

J.C. Previn
Saint John West, N.B.

I have just finished reading *RCMP will patrol highways again in New Brunswick* (Oct.'88). If I had wanted to read gossip and rumours, I would have picked up a copy of the *Enquirer*... Who is Raymond Cook and what makes his version of the whole situation worthy of print? And where does Alan Grant get his figures? Statements like, "they worked on a quota system," "Mickey Mouse operation," "the NBHP spent only half their on-duty time actually patrolling the highways,"... are not only slanderous, but...untrue...

I will concede that there are a few members of the NBHP that are not up to snuff but the majority of men and women are trained law enforcement officers who do the best they can with what little resources, responsibility and respect they are given by the province.

Angela Johnston
St. Stephen, N.B.

I write with a great deal of concern in regard to the totally false impression your readers may have formed after reading *Hibernia deal edges closer to reality but at what cost?* (Oct.'88). Your correspondent, J.M. Sullivan, has presented a totally one-sided view of the negotiations leading up to the Hibernia deal, the nature of the agreement itself

and the general reaction to this initiative...

The facts clearly indicate that our province got a very good deal with the Hibernia agreement and this is a view shared by a majority of local, national and international observers...

Approximately 37 per cent of the entire project work content, or about \$2 billion, is guaranteed to Newfoundland businesses. The remaining 63 per cent is open to bids from companies from all over the world and competitive Newfoundland companies will have a better than average opportunity to capture some of these contracts...

The article also fails to accurately reflect the royalty and tax regime presented in the Hibernia agreement... Newfoundland will receive royalties from the first barrel of oil produced from Hibernia when the field is in operation in about 1996. This royalty will be one per cent of gross revenue and will increase by one per cent every 18 months to a total of five per cent, which will be the base royalty on every succeeding barrel of oil produced.

The second royalty is triggered when the project costs are recovered and would equal the greater of five per cent of gross revenue or 30 per cent of net revenue from the sale of each barrel. The third royalty covers a windfall situation and would come into effect if oil prices rise sharply over the life of the field. This royalty would equal an additional 12.5 per cent on each barrel produced...

Other false impressions left by this story:

There was no deal to develop Hibernia in 1982, simply a suggestion from then federal energy minister, Jean Chretien, which he subsequently withdrew...

The present world price of oil is not a contributing factor to the viability of Hibernia. It is the prices during the operational phase, from 1996 to around 2012...

I have come to expect opposition leaders in our province to take the low road...I find it discouraging when a journal such as *Atlantic Insight*, which has garnered a much-deserved reputation for information and accuracy, would print such an unbalanced presentation of this very important development...

Hal Barrett
Minister of Development and Tourism
Government of Newfoundland
and Labrador

Riding the Newfoundland rails

Like any railroad buff who knows of its demise, I shall mourn for the Newfoundland railway, *The end of the line* (Sept.'88). I thought my Haligonian friend was pulling my leg about rolling stock being blown off the tracks until our visit

in 1977 when an innkeeper in Port-aux-Basques kindly spent some of his valuable time telling me about the line, the winds off the Long Range and about Wreckhouse...

On the way back to Port-aux-Basques from St. John's, we stopped to get a snapshot of the tracks meandering up the slope near the shoreline. While getting in position to snap the picture, I espied the railway place sign down the bank: Wreckhouse. I surmise that I am one of the few who have a snap of the sign ignobly resting there.

On taking a reproduction of a photo of the Newfie Bullet to be framed, the man said, "Hey, man, I rode on that thing when I was stationed there!" It's a small world.

Carl S. Hellijas
Wethersfield, Conn., USA

Beautiful Douglas Avenue

A very nice article in your Homes section, *A unique and beautiful street* (Sept.'88). I believe one of the large beautiful homes was owned by F.G. Spencer of the theatre chain during World War I. My grandfather, George Scaplen, was gardener and caretaker at that time. The caretaker and his wife lived in the home provided for them down in the backyard garden area. It too was a nice dwelling and the gardens beautiful...

There were other beautiful old homes on Douglas Avenue which our family was connected with, as my father worked for J.T. Knight for many years and Mr. Charles McDonald. These bring back many nice memories.

Betty Mabey
Wilson's Beach
Campobello Island, N.B.

Errors of omission

...I made the Windsor Pumpkin Muffins from your recipe, *Peerless Pumpkin* (Oct.'88). You forgot to mention the baking powder. I have cooked for 40 years, so judged that two teaspoons would be okay. It was and the muffins were good...

Gertrude Delaney
McAdam, N.B.

(Editor's note: although the baking powder was inadvertently omitted from the list of ingredients, it was mentioned in the recipe instructions — "Sift the flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg together in a bowl." We hope that even inexperienced cooks picked up on that and added some baking powder. If not, please try them again. The recipe calls for two-and-a-half teaspoons of baking powder.)

Observing *Wigilia* and sharing *oplatek* in Sydney

Celebrating a traditional Christmas each year has helped a Polish community in Cape Breton keep its culture alive

On Christmas Eve places are set at the table for absent family members and hay is sometimes strewn under the table to remind everyone that Christ was born in a manger. A lighted candle is placed in the window as a beacon for strangers in the night. At the appearance of the first star in the east, the family gathers and celebrates the birth of the Christ child by wishing on the star. The observance is called the *Wigilia* and is part of the Christmas celebrations of the Polish community of Sydney, N.S.

Wigilia and other holiday traditions were brought to Canada by the ancestors of the Polish families who are now an integral part of Whitney Pier. These Poles were lured from their native land at the turn of the century by the promise of work and better life. They came from all different areas of Poland — they were poor and uneducated for the most part. Many were farmers who had worked the rich, fertile farmland of their mostly low-lying country. Others worked in manufacturing, in iron and steel and in textiles.

Most of the Polish immigrants who came to Eastern Canada found themselves working at the Sydney Steel Plant and the coke ovens that supplied the plant with fuel. Naturally, they settled near their jobs in Whitney Pier. The wages weren't much and the work was long and hard. Some of them not only worked in shifts at their jobs but, to save money, they housed as many as they could under one roof. One group would go to work when the other group came home...even their beds were used in shifts.

As the Poles settled into the Cape Breton community, they maintained their heritage by continuing traditions, especially at Christmas time. In many households on Christmas Eve, the eldest member of the family still distributes a peace wafer called *oplatek*, which is similar to communion bread. It's shared by everyone at the table as a token of friendship and love. Even absent family members are sent the *oplatek* in the mail. The meal that evening consists of 12 meatless dishes of fish, vegetables, traditional beet soup and dumplings, as well as the familiar *perogi* and sauerkraut. Dessert is poppy-seed cake or apple strudel, or maybe honey cakes and nuts.

The typical Christmas tree is de-

corated with homemade decorations of straw, nuts, fruits and is lit with candles. Neighbourhood children go from house to house singing carols, or *kalendy*. The carols may be religious or folk tunes set to traditional dance beats. Christmas dinner features goose or duck and the day is spent at home with family and friends and at mass.

The Christmas season begins to wind down on Epiphany, Jan. 6, when the parish priest goes from door-to-door and writes the initials K.M.B. in blessed white chalk over each door, signifying the initials of the Three Wise Men. It's believed this will protect those within from misfortune.

Throughout the year and especially at Christmas, the focal point of the Polish community is its church. The Church of the Nativity of St. Mary, opened in 1913,

is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Religious holidays include St. Michael's Day, when they give thanks for the protection of St. Michael the Archangel, and May 3, a day of commemoration of the Polish Constitution of 1791. St. Catherine's Day on Nov. 25 marks the last festive occasion before the Christmas season. All these celebrations include feasting, dancing and singing.

For first and second generation Polish Canadians, celebrating these holidays is essential to preserving and promoting their culture. "When the first immigrants came here at the turn of the century, they had only three things: their names, their pride and their religion," says Frank Starzomski, a second generation Canadian. "We want to hold on to that."

Ironically, it is the younger generation that is hindering the community's growth — there are now fewer than 90 families in the parish. Some young people don't want to take the time to get involved in their cultural legacy. Others have had to move away from the area to find work. Starzomski, however, continues to be optimistic. The past president of the Cape Breton Polish Cultural Association, says, "They (the immigrants) sacrificed a tremendous amount for us...and I consider myself privileged and fortunate to belong to this ethnic group." ❧

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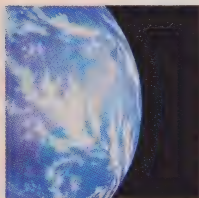
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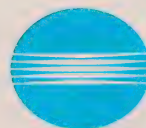


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DAVE RYAN

The social event of the year

It started as a family affair but New Year's Eve at the harbourfront has since grown into a popular tradition

by Beth Ryan

The Christmas season in St. John's reaches a frenzied peak on New Year's Eve when 10,000 revellers flock to the city's harbourfront for the largest, most spontaneous social event of the year.

This 21-year-old celebration started as a small family gathering in 1967 but it has since developed into a full-blown extravaganza complete with fireworks, a live radio broadcast of dance music and a shuttle bus service that carries party goers from around the city to the waterfront.

When Gwen Brokenshire and her family moved from Toronto to St. John's in 1967, she decided that they needed a unique way to spend their first New Year's Eve here. So she and her husband bundled their four sons off to the port city's bustling harbour to ring in the New Year with the bells and horns of the visiting fishing vessels. Over the next few years, the Newfoundland-born Brokenshire added friends and relatives to the celebration and brought along champagne and fireworks to make the event complete.

"In the beginning there was just the family and a few foreign seamen from the fishing vessels," says Fred Brokenshire, one of Gwen's sons. "And now, 21 years later, there are 10,000 people down there with us. My mother was instrumental in keeping the tradition going. We boys would be out at parties with our friends but by a quarter to twelve, we'd be sure to get down to the waterfront."

The Brokenshire family had hoped to keep the party spontaneous and informal but as the crowd increased each year, so did the need for security and planning.

These days, a committee made up of representatives from the local police department, fire department, federal Harbour Police and the City of St. John's meets before Christmas to plan a safe and happy New Year's Eve. The fire department supervises the fireworks displays and the police control traffic in an attempt to keep downtown streets clear on this busy evening. Fred Brokenshire, a local producer at CBC Radio, meets with the committee as a representative of the media.

"We don't want to over-organize and spoil the party but we also want to make sure that the traffic doesn't get backed up and no one gets hurt," says Brokenshire.

CBC Radio got into the act a few years ago by broadcasting live from the harbourfront and counting down the minutes until midnight. "We play a few hours of party music starting with the boogie woogie sounds of the '40s and working up to the Beatles and Whitney Houston. It becomes an instant street-dance down there," says Brokenshire.

To make sure that everyone can make it to what Brokenshire calls "the best-attended social event of the year," the Metrobus line runs a shuttlebus service from shopping malls at different points in the city. People have also chartered Metrobuses to bring guests from their private house parties to the waterfront for the celebrations and back home afterward.

The enthusiasm for the event will defy even Mother Nature. When a snowstorm hit the city on New Year's Eve 1986, the mayor announced that the waterfront festivities would be cancelled. But Fred

Brokenshire and the CBC crew headed out to brave the storm and provide the party ambience for whoever decided to join them. "It was just like old times — there was my family and friends and a few thousand other diehards," says Brokenshire.

Brokenshire says few other cities have New Year's Eve celebrations that can compare with St. John's. "If you take a look at the New Year's Eve celebrations in other cities, you'll find nothing quite like ours. Besides the Times Square event in New York, I can't think of any other city that does it like we do," he says.

Folklorist Philip Hiscock says the blowing of ship's horns and whistles to ring in the New Year is a tradition that's shared by many port cities but people have made it into a real cultural event here in St. John's.

"On New Year's Eve on the waterfront, all the social roles and barriers break down and people are hugging and kissing and being affectionate with people they don't know. It's all a part of the celebration. An anthropologist has called this a state of social grace or 'communitas'," says Hiscock.

For people in outpost Newfoundland, celebrations aren't on such a large scale but they do go on regularly throughout the entire holiday season. "For many Newfoundlanders, the Christmas socializing really gets underway on the day before Christmas Eve. In some places, it's called 'Tibb's Eve' or 'Tipp's Eve' and in others, it's 'Tipsey Eve,' probably because that's when people break out the Christmas spirits," says Hiscock.

Hiscock works out of the Language and Folklore Archive at Memorial University where a substantial body of original research into Newfoundland folk traditions is catalogued. He says folklorists have studied the specific Christmas customs of individual Newfoundland outposts and recorded oral histories from local residents.

In Green's Harbour, Trinity Bay, folklore graduate student Gordon Cox observed the organized Christmas carolling tradition. Hiscock says, "Cox found that the tradition was rooted in one or two families and was passed down by word of mouth. Their carols are folk songs as opposed to hymns or book-learned carols. But it's an interesting custom because it's the only place where there's an organized (folk) carolling tradition."

But any tradition that involves visiting the homes of friends and family is still extremely popular in Newfoundland.

"Christmas has changed a lot in the last 40 years for Newfoundlanders because of Confederation and our exposure to popular culture and advertising for consumer goods," says Hiscock. "But the traditional aspects of the season are still very powerful here."



Influencing their community

This women's organization continues to survive because it's adaptable — changing as the world around it changes

by Kumari Campbell

Each year, for Clara Coffin and the other 24 members of the Fortune Women's Institute, Christmas preparations begin in early October. That's when they drag out the knitting bags that have been idle all summer, dust off the knitting needles and crochet hooks and start work on their special Christmas project.

This year Clara and her group have fashioned yarn ornaments such as bells and wreaths that will adorn Christmas trays at the new Souris Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Charlottetown. In past years they have knitted finger puppets (to distract from the sting of taking blood samples from little fingers) for the Izaak Walton Killam Hospital for Children in Halifax and socks and mittens for seniors in their own community.

Fortune Women's Institute is by no means the only group involved in such generous deeds. Across Prince Edward Island there are approximately 200 Women's Institute branches with a total of 2,800 active members. Each and every one of them has a special Christmas project.

On the Island, W.I. is the most active rural women's group. From its inception in 1913, it has been a grass-roots community organization. Each local makes its own decisions about how to raise and spend its funds, with no orders filtering down from the national or even provincial level. More importantly, these decisions are based solely on the best interests

of the individual community.

Women's Institute is active throughout the year with its innumerable community activities but at Yuletide, the season of giving, the members shift into high gear to ensure that every Island citizen, regardless of age, religion and financial status, enjoys a warm and happy Christmas.

Margaret Stewart has been a member of the Kingsboro local for the past 42 years. She recalls an aunt and a great aunt who were charter members when the local began in 1914. "Our local first started on Oct. 14, 1914. That year they knitted socks and stitched quilts for our boys overseas."

Prior to school consolidation in the 1960s, Women's Institute was greatly involved with the one-room school houses that dotted the Island. Many veteran W.I. members agree that it was within this sphere that the Institute became prominent on the Island. In many cases it was W.I. that raised funds to heat the schools, provide furnishings and supplies, food and beverage programs and even "extras" such as music and art education. It was also W.I. that provided sanitary drinking fountains (replacing the uncovered water buckets and tin dippers) and initiated the switch from outhouses to indoor plumbing. Since consolidation, schools are administered by government-funded school boards, but W.I. has still not relinquished its duty to the children of the community. Instead, today they assist by donating prizes and funding scholarships as well as by raising funds for special

needs of individual schools. At Christmas many W.I. locals provide treats to be distributed to the children at their annual Christmas concerts.

According to W.I. philosophy, from the school to the community is a single step. Over the years W.I. has made many contributions to Island life — from sponsorship of a provincial sanatorium in 1930 to donating an ambulance to the Red Cross war effort in 1940, from helping the provincial government set up public libraries in rural centres to organizing the P.E.I. Drama Festival and the P.E.I. Music Festival. The list goes on.

Although the original founder, Adelaide Hoodless of Wentworth County, Ontario, organized the W.I. to provide an educational forum for country women (this still remains its main objective), today, W.I. is best known for its tireless service to the community at large.

Florence Matheson is one of the *grandes dames* of Women's Institute on P.E.I., having earned the Order of Canada for her efforts. With 51 years of Institute leadership under her belt — at the local, provincial, national and international levels — she believes firmly that "the individual local is the most important element of our organization. Their influence at the community level is what W.I. is all about."

One Christmas activity that all locals undertake is the provision of food baskets — which often also include items of clothing, toys and other gifts — to the poor, shut-ins and seniors of each community. In addition, at the December meeting, when each group usually has its own Christmas party and gift exchange, most bring extra gifts to be placed under the tree. These are donated to a hospital, seniors' home or convalescent home in the area. In many communities, senior citizens receive special attention with gifts, greeting cards and Christmas parties provided for them by W.I. members.

In some communities like Harrington, the Institute holds a Christmas party and carol-sing for the entire community. Others, like Crapaud, prefer to hold craft fairs, the proceeds of which benefit local institutions such as the fire department or medical centre.

Joyce MacKenzie, past president of the provincial federation, says, "the key to our success is our perpetual adaptability. As the world has changed around us through the years, we have managed to change with it." In spite of the continuing exodus from rural P.E.I. and the influx of organizations that unintentionally compete for membership with W.I., Kaye Crabbe, president-elect of the provincial federation sees nothing but rainbows on the horizon for the organization. It seems a fitting forecast for a group of women who continue to provide rainbows for those around them. ☑

Bringing back Calithumping

Some of the best parts of an old tradition are being revived as Frederictonians welcome the New Year

by Rick MacLean

Boss Gibson was a big man in the days of the lumber barons of New Brunswick, big physically and big in the power he wielded in the Marysville area near Fredericton. It was a company town and he owned the company. But all of that failed to protect his turkey the day the Calithumpians came through his door, snatched it and left, still hidden behind their disguises.

Today, the history of the Calithumpians is remembered by few. But one who is interested in its history as well as its future is Peter Pacey of the Calithumpian Theatre Company in Fredericton.

Pacey's interest began in the 1970s when he was a teacher. He was interested in local history and the stories remembered by the older people in the area, so he sent his students out to talk to them. Among those interviewed was Luke Morrison, now deceased.

"He told my kids of being a Calithumpian when he was a youth and how it was basically a loosely structured club or almost gang of kids who would do this particular cultural activity, if you want to call it that, at various times during the year.

"They would dress up in costumes and disguises and go out and — similar to trick or treating — they'd go from house to house and see if they'd be recognized, sometimes do little skits and what have you and other times maybe pull some kind of prank."

It was done in a spirit of fun, Pacey says. "It was a way of letting off steam and celebrating the new year."

Morrison's story stuck with Pacey, who decided to see what else he could find out.

In a centennial project of the city of Saint John, called *Footprints in Time*, he found a reference to a Calithumpian parade. A bicentennial project called "Fredericton: The last 200 years" tells of Calithumpians storming into the governor's levy uninvited and demanding refreshment, all the while keeping up a barrage of noise.

There is also a reference to the Calithumpians in the 1987 book *Fit to Print* by B.J. Grant of Fredericton. The book is a collection of excerpts from 150 years of New Brunswick papers. Included in it is part of a speech by the commander of Calithumpians in Woodstock from *The Carleton Sentinel* of June 2, 1855: "I advise...when you take off your splendid costumes this evening, pack

them up carefully, and put them in some secret place, where they will be beyond the touch of unworthy hands."

The secretiveness and rowdiness are similar to the better known practice of mumming or mummering in Newfoundland, Pacey says.

"The idea was to go into someone's house in disguise. If they recognized you, then you had to take your costume off. Otherwise you'd keep it on and you could be outrageous. That's part of what we do at Hallowe'en. They could become someone else and sort of act as they may not...they could let their true self out a little bit."

Luke Morrison said much the same thing of the Calithumpers. "It was kids from 'good' families who, perhaps especially at the turn of the century and before, had to behave in a Victorian kind of upright manner and in a very, very controlled kind of environment," Pacey says. "This was like a way for them to escape that control and restriction and go a little bonkers."

The origin of the word "Calithumpian" is as obscure as the history of its practice. Pacey has run into a number of spellings — Calithumpians, Callathumpians and Callithumpians. He remembers one reference to gallows which might hint at the word's beginnings. "In the original, gallows were sometimes just a platform for a political speech. And gallowthumpians could have been people who were paid supporters making noise to support a political candidate."

Whatever its origins, Calithumpery is undergoing something of a rebirth in Fredericton with the help of something called First Night.

"It's a non-alcoholic celebration of New Year's that includes all kinds of performing artists in various venues from churches to city hall, outdoors, the legislature assembly and this sort of thing," Pacey says.

It's a new idea for Canadians, but something of a tradition in the Boston area. Last year, Fredericton and Vancouver held First Night parties on New Year's Eve. There was a parade in Fredericton and Pacey's Calithumpians led the way. Pacey even gave an old-time Calithumpian speech, making all those present honorary members. Between 5,000 and 7,000 people took part last year, Pacey says. There are plans to expand the festivities this year. And yes, those who show up in costume will be initiated into the Calithumpians.

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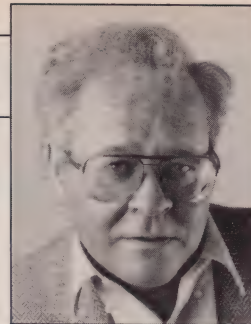
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The ins and outs of being old

If I live till 2020 A.D., I'll be one of millions of unproductive old folks that productive young folks are obliged to support. Since we old-timers may be richer than most younger people and less burdened by mortgages and children, the working population may resent paying taxes for our fat pensions. In *The New Republic*, Henry Fairlie suggests that when the huge baby-boom generation reaches retirement early in the 21st century, working people may revolt against taxes that squeeze them dry to give a juicy living to elderly parasites.

Moreover, Fairlie continues, America's population is growing increasingly brown, Spanish-speaking and Catholic: "As the population comes to include ever-growing numbers of young Mexicans, Central Americans, South Americans and Asians, they too are likely to rebel, especially since their own families assume so many of the traditional responsibilities of caring for the old, even in their new environment. Why should they work to indulge the white elders so generously?"

Canadians over the age of 75 now number more than a million, better than double the figure for 1961. Those over 65 have increased more than twice as fast as the population as a whole, and now number 2.7 million. Roughly 11 per cent of all Canadians are over 65 and by the year 2031, this will climb to 21 per cent or six million old folks. Meanwhile, Canada's fertility rate has declined from 3.9 children per woman in 1960 to 1.7, one of the lowest in the industrial world, and abortions per 100 live births have risen from three in 1970 to more than 17. "Staying single, getting married later in life and convenient divorce contribute to silence in the nursery," *The Globe and Mail* recently explained. "Contraception makes it easy to avoid what lovers do not want. And abortion makes it possible to escape the consequences when contraception fails."

Leaving aside what might happen to Canada's cultural vitality during the dramatic aging of its population, there's the little matter of the economy. We'll have more and more elderly drawing pensions and driving up the cost of medicare, with fewer and fewer money-making younger people to foot the bills. To make the situation even crazier, people as young as 50 want to be recognized as "senior citizens." In a recent letter to Halifax's *Chronicle-Herald*, a woman argued that anyone who is

"50-plus" and also living in senior citizens' housing, should get the discount prices, travel deals and other perks that the commercial world bestows on those over 65.

Ads in magazines for old folks promote the notion that you shouldn't really have to wait till you're 65 to enjoy the privileges of senior citizenship. Thus, Ramada hotels, in the fat, glossy *Grandparents*, offer 25 per cent discounts to seniors and define them as people merely 60 or older. An ad in *Discovery*, which bills itself as "The National Lifestyle Magazine for Mature Canadians," touts apartments for seniors who are "in their 60th year and older." Travel agencies advertise tours "designed especially for the 55-plus traveller" and for "the discerning 50-plus traveller."

**One out of
three adults in
Canada is over
50 years old
and 75 per
cent of that
group is
mortgage free**

Why the rush to lower the age of entry into senior citizenship? I don't know, but for the first time in memory, it's becoming In to be old. Actress Gloria Swanson complained in 1960 that all Hollywood producers cared about was "the ghastly American worship of youth." Now, however, many of the most celebrated figures in show business are old: George Burns (92), Lillian Gish (92), Bob Hope (85), John Gielgud (84), Laurence Olivier (81), Katharine Hepburn (81), Bette Davis (80). Don Ameche and Hume Cronyn, two of several

charming geezers in the recent film *Cocoon*, are now 80 and 77 respectively. Cronyn and his 79-year-old wife, Jessica Tandy, are still barnstorming like young vaudeville stars; and that magnificent long-legged hoover, Ann Miller, is still tap-dancing on stage. She must be nudging 70.

She's a good example of something that's happening to old folks as they become In folks: they're trading in their rocking chairs for skis, tennis racquets, hiking boots and "adventure holidays." Alongside a story entitled "Sex improves with age, says survey booklet," *Discovery* offers its readers "heli-hiking in the Bugaboos." An ad invites mature Canadians to "view the wildlife as you dog sled, snowmobile, ski or hike to the floe edge" on Baffin Island. "Adventures on wheels" describes The Cross-Canada Cycle Tour Society: "The average member's age is 66. Together, they've cycled over 10,000 miles across Canada, Australia, the United States and New Zealand."

If you're really only as old as you feel, then the "mature Canadians" who enjoy these adventures, aren't really old. Nor, as it happens, are they poor. To be sure, North America has its share of frail, handicapped and impoverished old people. You hear a lot about them when old folks lobby government for benefits only the elderly can reap. You hear less, however, about the strong, athletic and rich older people who draw pensions they don't need. They're the ones, the In ones, that ad agencies — and manufacturers of everything from doorknobs to theatre seats — are about to woo as never before. Why? It's simple. Toronto ad executive Marg Raynard recently marvelled, "When you realize that one out of three adults is over 50 — 75 per cent of whom are mortgage-free and have 50 per cent of their income for discretionary spending — then it is evident that this is a gold mine for merchandisers."

Do we want a huge population of active, healthy, comfortably fixed senior citizens leeching money from a shrinking number of hard-working young people? If not, we may have to raise, rather than lower, the official retirement age; introduce a means tests to the government pension system; and open our doors far wider to young immigrants who want to gamble their lives on Canada. As for me, I'm never going to retire. I'll keep on writing this stuff till I drop. ☑



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The Human Energy Behind Nuclear Energy

Dr. Eva Rosinger is the Director, Waste Management Concept Review, with Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL).

She is responsible for managing all aspects of the review of AECL's concept for used nuclear fuel disposal.

Dr. Rosinger has an M. Sc. degree in Chemical Engineering and a PhD in Chemistry, and has been involved in the radioactive waste program since 1976. Dr. Rosinger is seen here at the used fuel storage bay at Gentilly 2 Generating Station in Quebec.

Nuclear Waste in Canada

WHAT'S IN STORE

It looks just like a swimming pool. You can walk around it and gaze into the luminescent blue water. And while you might be tempted to dive in, the purpose of this pool is far from recreational.

"This is where we store used nuclear fuel", explains Dr. Eva Rosinger, a scientist with the team responsible for waste disposal research.

"CANDU reactors are powered by fuel bundles made up of uranium pellets sealed within zirconium tubes. Bundles are harmless to handle before they're put in the reactor. However, upon removal a year and a half later, they are highly radioactive and must be treated with respect."

On-site Storage

The used fuel is stored at electricity generating stations – each station has its own pool. Ordinary water cools the fuel and shields workers from radiation.

"This storage method has been used safely since 1962 when Canada's first nuclear power plant went into operation. And it will continue to be used in the future. But if we did nothing more, future generations would have to continue to monitor and maintain the storage facilities."

"Nuclear reactors produce very little used fuel. The total amount in Canada by the year 2000 would fill only three Olympic size swimming pools."

Permanent Disposal

"Since 1978, members of Canada's scientific and engineering community, government departments, universities and private industry have been working together on a multi-barrier concept of disposal. In this concept, used fuel bundles

would be enclosed in a corrosion-resistant container. The containers would be buried in an engineered vault deep in the rock of the Canadian Shield, one of the most stable geologic formations in the world."

"Today after many years of research, we understand enough to say with confidence that used nuclear fuel can be safely and permanently disposed of in this way."

This concept for permanent disposal is now being prepared for an independent environmental review and public hearings. Site selection will not occur until the concept has been accepted.

Environmental Responsibility

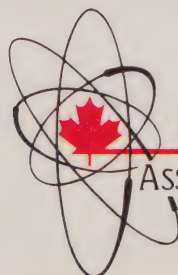
"Nuclear energy offers an environmentally clean and efficient method of electricity production – it does not contribute to acid rain or the greenhouse effect."

"The nuclear industry has taken responsibility for its used fuel from day one. We do know how to handle it. Used nuclear fuel represents only a small fraction of all toxic wastes produced by industry."

"I believe that the technologies we are now developing for permanent disposal of used nuclear fuel will one day be used in dealing with other kinds of toxic waste."

For more information please contact:
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Falling through the cracks

by Leo McKay Jr.

Spontaneous combustion he had heard of. Some people just start burning. He had seen a man like that on *Barney Miller* who had complained of being hot all the time. He wasn't afraid of burning today. He wasn't hot at all. He could see his breath. It was probably early afternoon by now although the clock radio said 8:44 a.m. in a yellow glow.

First he had believed he hadn't got out of bed because of the cold. Electric heat. God damn electric heat and here it was almost Christmas. Between the Nova Scotia Power Corporation and the Nova Scotia winter there was a conspiracy to break him. Too damn dear, that electric heat, so he had turned it off.

He'd woken up in the morning with the DJ from CKEC in New Glasgow telling him it was something after seven. Yes, it had been something after seven, not something before eight, that he was sure of. He had lain there looking at his breath rising to the ceiling like a departed spirit and thought to himself, too damn cold for me to be getting out of this bed this morning. Nope, not today, too cold.

So now he lay there. He wasn't sleeping either. He was thinking. He was thinking about all the reasons for not getting out of bed. He looked at the bare boards of the floor. Full of cracks, and when he walked on it the boards bounced up and down like some sort of game. Like a trampoline. Then he got mad because he knew it wasn't a game.

What if I step on that floor, he thought. What if I step on that floor with

only wanting to go and have a leak — and by now that is what he needed more than anything — and the boards open right up and suck me down. Those cracks could open at any time. Honest to Jesus, it wouldn't surprise me. Just because I never seen it happen before don't mean it never happened. And it don't mean it *can't* happen, neither.

It was Dec. 21. Somewhere the baby Jesus wasn't even a baby yet — curled in the Virgin's womb, waiting to be born.

He thought about Jesus. I bet all them people came all that way to see him born — the wise men, the drummer boy, the works — I bet they never saw that before. I bet when they got out of bed that day that's the last thing they expected to see. The Virgin Birth. Imagine. Even supposing they came a hundred miles to see it, it must have been hard to believe. I bet that after they was finished being surprised — like after Jesus, Mary and Joseph left — they were kind of wishing they never saw nothing. Like after you see something like that, how could you go back to being a fisherman, or a carpenter or a wife?

He was still afraid of being sucked into the floor, but the pressure on his bladder convinced him to take a chance. He tiptoed to the bathroom and looked at the reflection in the bowl waiting for it to splinter into a billion pieces at the sound of water on water. He wondered how many times in his life he had peed. Before going back to bed, he took a piece of paper and a pen with him to work it out.

OK, he was 35, so that times 365



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FICTION

works out to be... five fives are 25, carry the two. Six fives are 30 and two are 32, carry the three. Three fives are 15 and three are 18. Five threes... 15 ... six threes... 18 and one... three threes...

Jesus Christ. He didn't even bother to estimate the number of times a day he urinated. 12,775 days he had lived. Twelve thousand. No wonder getting up in the morning got harder and harder. By his next birthday he would have got out of bed thirteen thousand times. He pulled the covers over his head.

The phone rang. Foreman. He had just started working again after 11 months without a stamp. Eleven months was a long time to keep a fellow away from his job and then expect him to start showing up again punctual in less than a week. It was the longest stretch he had been away from the plant in 17 years. The longest time before that was eight months and a half. He worked at the car works in Trenton, but he lived in this three room apartment on Foord Street in Stellarton. Seventeen years he had lived here and worked there. Three TV sets, a wife and two kids had come and gone in that time.

He lay with the blanket still over his face, the telephone ringing. He thought to pick up his pen and paper and try to work out exactly how much of the last 17 years he had spent in that plant, and how much he had spent at the Legion or The Bluenose, or sitting in the apartment somehow being hungry and putting on weight at the same time.

But he didn't want to move now. He wanted to be neutral. Completely inert. The phone stopped ringing.

Earlier he had considered simply playing hookey. Going to the tav, spending the day with the crowd he had been with for the last year. But how would they see him? Him with a job and not interested in going to work. Besides, those cracks in the floor were really starting to bother him. God only knew what could happen with them. He doubted they would open up and suck him in, but he might melt. Sort of drip down through them. He could come from together and slip down there like a stray piece of paper.

Cracks in general upset him. There had been cracks between the tiles in his mother's kitchen when he was a kid. Crevices zigzagged across deserts he had seen in pictures. Gaps in sidewalks twisted across the so-called civilized world like a tangle of serpents from hell.

Suddenly he realized the connection, the link that made it all sort of clear. They were holes; places where the Steelworker who had welded this whole thing together hadn't traced a thick enough bead.

He shivered.

You never can tell what might happen, he thought. I'm staying right here.

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Warm
Candles on the tree, the annual
memories
school concert, an apple and a
keep
doll were highlights of the season
Christmas
for three of our readers
alive



Araminta's Blanket

by Ruth Hatfield

"Please, please, may we have the tree gifts now?" My mouth was full of toast on that Christmas morning in 1913.

"Not until after breakfast," said my mother firmly. "You've opened your stocking gifts — now you must wait until Daddy lights the sparklers."

"But I saw my doll under the tree!" I protested. "I saw her pink blanket. Please, may I hold her?" But Mother was adamant. I pouted. I was five years old and spoiled. "What shall I call my doll? She's got to have a very special name."

"What about Belle — for the Christmas bells?" Mother suggested.

"How about Araminta?" Father's eyes were twinkling. "Or Peacherino?" Father was good at names. He named all the cows and the pigs and the dog and cats with unusual names which stuck.

"Ara-MIN-ta!" I savoured the syllables. "Oh, I like that. That's her name — Araminta!"

"Time to go!" Mother rose and picked up the baby.

We all filed into the living room. In one corner of the room stood a graceful fir tree. It was festooned with the popcorn strings and paper chains which I had helped to make. There were tiny paper

bells, a beautiful paper angel on the top and clipped to the end of each branch was a sparkler candle.

Underneath were our family presents, nearly all homemade by our parents, as well as books for everybody. In the centre, in a pretty box, lay my doll. She had a celluloid head with celluloid hair and her face wore a permanently beautiful smile. Her body was stuffed with cotton wool and she wore a filmy pink dress and fluffy bonnet. Across the foot of the box was a delicate crocheted blanket. It would be some years before I would know that the celluloid head had been purchased from a toy shop and that Mother had spent many evening hours stitching the



cloth body and the dainty clothing, to say nothing of the beautiful pink blanket. She was the most beautiful doll I had ever seen and I longed to pick her up.

I gazed in awe as Father lighted the sparkler candles. They were far more glorious than modern electric lights. Very few homes in rural Nova Scotia had electricity at that time — indeed, it was not in general use except in the towns and cities until 1929. The sparklers seemed to me to be straight from Fairyland.

But then something happened. Although sparklers were supposed to be safe, at least one of these was not. In an instant the whole tree was ablaze. The presents underneath caught fire and were

completely burned.

All but one. I screamed and ran for Araminta. I was too late, but as Father pulled me back to safety I managed to grasp her little pink blanket, which now had a brown scorch stain on it. I stood sobbing as Araminta's celluloid head burst into flame and her beguiling smile disappeared forever. The adults soon extinguished the flames with buckets of water, but only Araminta's blanket remained.

During the next week I was inconsolable. I mourned Araminta and clutched her little scorched blanket closely even as I slept. Mother tried repeatedly to take it from me, saying she would wash it, but

I would not give it up.

On the morning of Jan. 1, Mother woke me gently placing on my pillow another Araminta exactly like the first one. I rubbed my eyes in bewilderment.

"The New Year fairies brought her," Mother explained. "Santa Claus was so sorry about the fire that he sent some more gifts. I'll make you a new blanket for Araminta."

"No, no, this one is hers!" I wrapped Araminta in the little pink blanket with the brown scorch stains and looked up into my mother's smiling face.

And we were, all three, tightly bonded together by love.

(Ruth Hatfield is 80 years old and legally blind. Her story, a true one, happened in Nova Scotia, 75 years ago. She now lives in Rosemere, Quebec.)

Christmas in the country

by Elaine C. Rector

One of the first Christmases I remember will date me for my gift was a doll with a bump in her hair to tie a ribbon to. She was called Hair Bow Peggy.

Living in the country, the school Christmas concert was the big event of the year. The boys cut a huge tree which was trimmed with borrowed and homemade things. While the boys hunted for the tree — taking lots of time because it was done in school time — the girls decorated the blackboards with coloured chalk pictures. Later, spruce boughs were tacked around the whole room. Bed sheet curtains made the stage, planks were put between seats to make extra seats. Neighbours brought lanterns for light. I remember and can smell the spruce yet. It was so still and quiet sitting there at dusk. It was so beautiful.

After the concert Santa arrived in a real sleigh with bells. I'm afraid children of today wouldn't recognize him. His only resemblance to the Santa of today was his falseface and if lucky, a red hat. However, he always wore the same old fur. My Uncle George had one the very same.

At home, gifts were few, but we always got a bag of candy and fruit. But it's the tree I remember. It was trimmed with about a dozen real candles. These were attached with a little spring clip holder. On Christmas, the neighbour children came to see our father light these candles. And for a few moments our tree would glow. We had no electricity.

After I was grown up and working at the local hospital in town I had a memorable Christmas. My sister and I always had Christmas morning off but we had to get back to serve the evening meal. One year we had one of our Nova Scotian snow storms and we walked the seven miles home for Christmas. The next day



COURTESY OF KINGS LANDING

the only way back was on horseback. Now my sister loved to ride but I had never tried. Boy, was I ever scared. My stepfather borrowed extra horses and asked a cousin to come along to bring the horses back. We made quite a procession — my stepfather, my sister, her boy friend, our cousin. We rode to the outskirts of town and got a taxi to work. I'll remember the day forever.

After I married and moved to Greenwood I remember a Christmas Eve communion service. It was beautiful, lit only by the communion candles and tree. As I knelt at the communion rail the old carol *Silent Night* took on a new meaning.

Now Christmas memories are being made here in Ontario as my seven grandchildren visit Grandma and spend Christmas. I hope some of the little things I do will make memories for them. (Elaine Rector lived on a farm in Nova Scotia during the '30s. She now lives in Trenton, Ont.)

The Christmas concert

by MacPherson Eveleigh

I grew up in a small Newfoundland community made up of two settlements with two religious denominations and two day schools. The Christmas concerts with their Christmas trees were the highlights of the season or maybe of the whole year as far as excitement and entertainment were concerned.

These concerts were held as near to Christmas Eve and Christmas Day as possible, sometimes one on Christmas Eve and the other on the evening of Christmas Day.

Practising for these concerts would commence in early December and usually it would be the sole responsibility of the schoolteachers who would prepare the parts and get some practice done after school in the evenings. This would be for the younger pupils. More practice for

older children not attending school or other young people would take place in the school but at night and for a night or more each week. Attending practice at night was rewarding for the young people who at that time had few other places to go. The boys would tease the girls, play tunes on combs or get thin strips of birch rind off the stove wood and blow through it between their thumbs and make a sound that was all its own.

The Salvation Army in my early days and before they got a larger school used to hold their concerts in their Church building, known then as "The Barracks," in order to accommodate all their people who attended plus quite a few people from the other denomination, then known as Methodist (and later United Church). Consequently, the Salvation Army concerts were more of a sacred nature than secular. They would open by the singing of a carol followed by prayer. This would be followed by recitations, dialogues,

Coming Soon.



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CHRISTMAS PAST

religious singing and a drill or two accompanied by a sacred song or hymn.

The Methodist school was small and it had to be crammed full and the young men and boys who could not get inside (or did not want to get in), usually had a good time in the built-on porch.

Admission to both concerts or any concert at that time was ten cents for adults and five cents for children. Ice cream would be sold for five cents a dish or cone and syrup with cake for ten cents a serving. The proceeds, with that of the admission fees, would be for the benefit of the school or school board.

Everything was appreciated and enjoyed but the trees — with or without much decoration — were the climax to the concert. No doubt most of the children would receive their regular stocking gifts in their homes from Santa but what they got "on the tree" was something extra and a source of great excitement.

As the concert concluded, the entire cast would commence to sing *Santa Claus is Coming to Town* and keep singing until he was well into the building and ready to pick or cut the presents from the tree. Santa was always made welcome and he would come in with bounds and bounces and he would shake hands all around.

Only a very few people really knew

who Santa was in actual life and the others were always anxious to find out. Sometimes the appointed Santa would get someone else to take his place in order to fool even those who knew his identity.

There would be a few special good gifts and some store toys for the children such as sleighs, dolls, toy horses, drums; also some picture books and pencil boxes but the predominating items would be apples, good large red ones. The most abundant items would be handkerchiefs, red and blue ones mostly for the men, more dainty white ones, boxed, for the women and girls.

Oh, how we think of those old days and if they could come once more. But they never will for me, now almost 75.

With a change in transportation, vehicles and good roads, and changes in communication such as telephones, radios and televisions, people's lives are different, especially in rural communities. So the big get-together of a concert and Christmas tree is a thing of the past. There are better schools now with their large auditoriums and other facilities and there are still some concerts of a more sophisticated nature but the appreciation is not so much expressed as it was in days of yore.

(Mac Eveleigh, formerly of Newstead, now lives in Lewisporte, Nfld.)

The more things change...

A look at some 100-year-old Christmas newspapers proves the adage...the more they stay the same

by Carol McLeod

Favourite Christmas customs, like favourite social and political issues, endure for generations. A quick glance through some of the newspapers and magazines Atlantic Canadians read a century ago shows that Victorians not only celebrated Christmas much as we do, but that they debated many of the same topics we debate today.

In December 1885, for instance, the Charlottetown *Daily Patriot* took a Yuletide swipe at the American government for wanting free access to Canadian fishing grounds. In the editor's opinion, not even letting Canadian fish duty free into United States markets was "fair return for throwing our waters open to the fishermen of the republic."

The *Daily Patriot* then breathed a sigh of relief that a recent smallpox epidemic in Charlottetown had not spoiled the Christmas retail trade before taking Ottawa to task over its failure to give Islanders the Christmas gift they wanted most — a tunnel linking Prince Edward Island with the mainland.

"Were the Island...sold 30 or 35 years ago to the highest bidder," the writer noted, "it would not have realized a sum sufficient to connect it to the Mainland by means of a tunnel, but...things have vastly changed...and although still isolated, we are part...of the broad Dominion and possess the most important condition on which we joined, viz., that we were to be taken out of our 'isolated' position and placed on equality with the other provinces."

Although the Halifax *Herald* sympathized with the plight of Islanders, it had other matters to contend with, such as scotching rumours that Christmas cards were on the way out. "Christmas cards are always said to be going out of fashion next year," it reported, "but as a matter of fact have no more idea of going than Sir John A. Macdonald..."

The *Herald* was right. Within a few years, cards had become so popular that Christmas backlogs were building up in the nation's post offices and many newspapers were decrying slow delivery.

In St. John's, where the Commercial



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CHRISTMAS PAST


and Union Banks had recently failed, the *Daily News* observed in December, 1895 that a very appropriate Christmas card could be made out of "a bank note of any denomination — the higher the better provided that it is not a Union or Commercial, as these latter have gone out of fashion within the past twelve months." (At the time most Canadian and Newfoundland banks issued their own currency.)

Lest children receiving Christmas gifts should have their mental development stunted by thoughts of a benevolent Santa Claus, there were reformers — even in the 1880s — who believed that the Jolly Old Elf should be exposed as a fraud. Outraged by the suggestion, the *Montreal Daily Star* thundered on Dec. 24, 1888 that "Santa Claus still lives in the minds and rules over the hearts of the younger generation, despite the efforts of the iconoclasts to dethrone him and show that he is a venerable humbug."

Whether Santa Claus was a humbug or not, children and adults alike devoured his gifts of apples, nuts, oranges and candies then turned their sights on Christmas dinner. Occasional rumblings that slaughterhouses were not as clean as they should be didn't deter Victorians from feasting on turkey, goose and roast beef. In fact, a few days before Christmas people in towns and cities all across Atlantic Canada trooped out to their favourite butcher's where, as the *Halifax Herald* enthused, the carcasses hanging on display were "a handsome sight and well worth going a long way to see."

One reporter noted that people viewing the carcasses in a city market did so in a way "suggestive of (being in) an art gallery." After all, he went on, "there is a beauty in a well-dressed sheep, as in a well-finished landscape and the head of a dead steer has much of the interest attaching to a picture of a still life..."

If Victorians overdramatized, they also overindulged. Fortunately, they could turn from the excesses of Christmas dinner to Radway's Ready Relief. At 25 cents a bottle, the miracle cure (sold before consumers expected, much less demanded, truth in advertising) came with the reassuring message that "90 out of 100 deaths...are caused by preventable diseases, the greater number of which can be exterminated from the system in a few hours with Radway's Ready Relief."

Relief was something Canadians would certainly need in the years ahead. On Dec. 22, 1887, the *Moncton Daily Transcript* reported that meetings were being held in Ottawa on "unrestricted reciprocity with the United States...and the great advantages that would accrue to Canadians from continental free trade." Favourite political issues, like favourite Christmas customs, endure for generations. 



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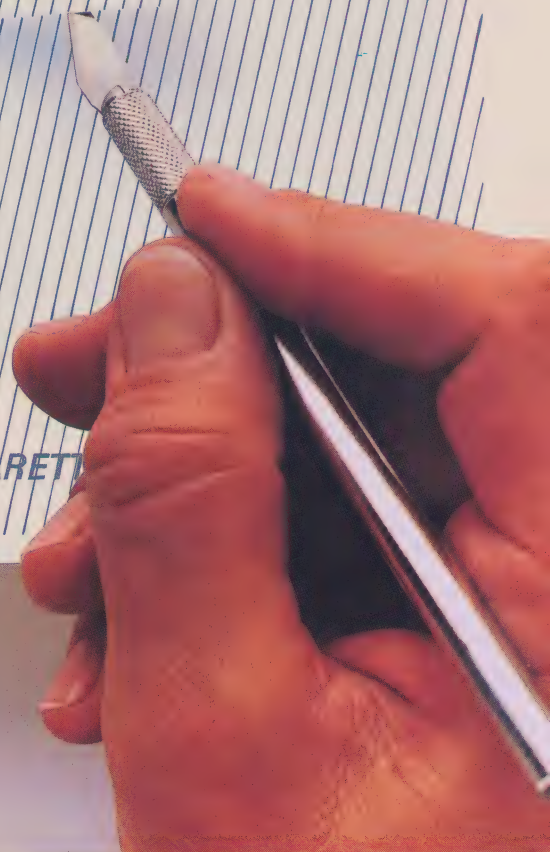
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FOLKS

As the P.E.I. Crafts Council Annual Christmas Fair approaches each November, life becomes busier for two Abrams Village women. **Josephine Arsenault** and **Anne Marie Arsenault** have been active members of the Abrams Village Co-operative since 1964, Anne Marie as the secretary and Josephine as the treasurer.

This co-operative is a group of 80 craftspeople, mostly women, formed in 1964 under the name of the First Acadian Guild. Its purpose was to provide training and an outlet for craftspeople of the area. In 1973 the group was chartered and the name was changed to The Abrams Village Co-operative.

In 1964 when the P.E.I. Crafts Council held its first Christmas fair at Confederation Centre in Charlottetown, Josephine, Anne Marie and other co-operative members brought their wares and set up a booth in colourful Christmas fashion. Josephine is a weaver and Anne Marie knits and crochets. Since then, they and other co-op members have been providing crafts for the booth at the Christmas fair each year. Aside from woven, knitted and crocheted crafts, the members also make spun and silk-screened products, jewellery, pottery and quilts.

Both Josephine and Anne Marie have worked in the booth at the Christmas fair for 25 years, travelling the 60 miles to Charlottetown and staying for the duration of the fair. "Setting up the booth is an exciting project," says Anne Marie. Josephine, who is now co-op president and an honorary member of the P.E.I. Crafts Council, says, "Everyone pitches in and it's always an exciting time for us."

— *Kathy Jorgensen*

Everyone would like to have a Merry Christmas but there aren't too many people who can say they are Mary Christmas. But a Chatham, N.B. woman can.

Mary Noel says she has had a lot of fun and many laughs over her name in the past 32 years. That's how long she has been married to René Noel. She gets a lot of kidding, too, especially around Christmas time.

The surname suits the whole family as Christmas is a special time of year for



Anne Marie (left) and Josephine Arsenault: Twenty-five years of Christmas fairs in P.E.I.

them. The Noels have five children — Teri Ann, Mike, Raymond, Mark and Christopher. "I made sure I stayed away from naming one of them Nicholas," she says. None of them was born on Christmas Day; the closest family birthday is in October.

Mary gets a kick out of people asking her name. "When I say Mary Noel, they ask me to spell it. I immediately say Mary Christmas. You should see the look on their face but then they write Noel," she says.

For years, especially when Mary and René were first married, they enjoyed getting Christmas cards. "There were many of them that had Noel on them and we knew, because they were special friends, they had picked out one specially for us," says Mary.

Mary has worked at the St. Michael's Roman Catholic Rectory for the past 14 years and says it's a great place to be during the holiday season. "It's an exciting place at Easter but working at the

rectory puts a person into the special spirit of Christmas," she says. Father Peter Bagley, now transferred to Woodstock, N.B., always introduced her as Mary Christmas.

At the Noels' home, the Christmas music begins playing the first week of December. When they hear *The First Noel*, someone comments, "there's our theme song." The Noels have changed their holiday traditions since the children have grown up, no longer opening gifts after midnight mass. "After Christmas Eve mass, we come home and have our



Mary Noel has had a lot of fun with her name over the years

traditional meat pies, sing and listen to music," Mary says. "But René and I don't open our presents until the following afternoon when all the children are here again for the big feast. I like this much better, it's more relaxing."

— Bonnie Sweeney

It's a sure sign that Christmas is around the corner — a young boy ringing a bell outside a storefront in downtown St. John's, beckoning passers-by to try their luck at the Mount Cashel Raffle. Don O'Keefe was one of those boys and, for almost 40 years, he has returned home to help the Mount Cashel Home for Boys raise 12 per cent of its annual budget.

As an orphan, O'Keefe lived at Mount Cashel from age seven to 16 but today very few of the 60 boys who live there are orphans. The home, run by the Christian Brothers, operates these days when many similar institutions have closed and the same can be said for the Mount Cashel Raffle, now in its 65th year.

"In those days," says O'Keefe, "raffles were the thing. There were at least four or five raffles on Water Street every Christmas." He believes the raffle has been so successful because Mount Cashel has been aggressive in its attempts to keep the name and the cause alive in people's minds. "The St. John's people are well behind the theme of Mount Cashel and what it stands for and it's their way to donate."

The boys are the organizers of the raffle — they get involved at age nine and



Fred and Maxine Wagner: bringing a little joy into the lives of those less fortunate

willingly progress through raffle jobs from ringing the bell to stacking the deep freezes and then selling tickets for "a winner a minute." O'Keefe says, "It broadens their horizons like nothing else."

The Mount Cashel Raffle is a Christmas tradition and atmosphere is its selling point. It has always been downtown except one year when a second mall location only lasted two weeks. "It lost the carnival atmosphere the raffle has

downtown," he says. "The raffle has a vibrancy and aliveness that you don't see everywhere and it spills over to the public."

People can't help but be drawn into that atmosphere. "The Mount Cashel raffle is an extension of Mount Cashel itself," says O'Keefe. "People can sense this is a family and the boys have a certain togetherness."

The Mount Cashel Raffle will continue for many years raising money "to buy those little niceties that every kid should have." O'Keefe says the "well-oiled machine" will have 200 winners a day and, if he could help it, "you wouldn't leavewith any money in your pocket."

— Lana Hickey

For the past seven years, Fred and Maxine Wagner of Halifax, N.S. have given up Christmas Day to bring a little happiness to the lives of the homeless and destitute.

The Wagners spend Christmas Day at Hope Cottage, a soup kitchen funded by the St. Vincent de Paul Society. There, they organize bingo, cribbage, card games and other recreational activities for those who are without relatives or friends on Christmas Day.

Maxine stays up until 3 a.m. on Christmas Eve wrapping gifts and prizes for about 20 men and 20 women who show up at the centre. The gifts are donated by people in the community.

On Christmas Day, the men and women leave Hope Cottage to attend a service at St. Patrick's Church. Afterwards, they have dinner and Fred dresses up as Santa to pass out gifts. Although this has worked well in past years, this year Fred is without a Santa Claus suit. "It's much too expensive to rent one," he says.

Centre director Brother Bill Whelton says, "Fred and Maxine, by trying to bring a little joy and happiness to men on the street during Christmas, exemplify Christian love and what the spirit of Christmas is all about." But the Wagners feel they receive much more than they give. "Here we see the giving side of Christmas," says Maxine, who is overwhelmed by the love and kindness of people during the Christmas season.

This love is not only shown by volunteers but also by the men and women who come to the centre. Maxine recalls one man who always tried to win a prize for his next door neighbour. "It was very touching," she says. "He had nothing himself, yet he thought only of his friend."

— Alice Walsh



Don O'Keefe: The raffle acts as the official start of Christmas

Festive fare

Rekindle a Christmas tradition enjoyed by early settlers with a feast of savoury roast goose and sauerkraut stuffing



by Judith Comfort

Lucky is the person with a farmer like Boyd Crouse in the neighbourhood. Crouse, who resides in Fauxburg near Lunenburg, N.S., raises two or three dozen geese every year to grace his customers' Christmas dinner tables.

In this day of factory-produced poultry, a chicken, turkey or goose that has "lived a little" is a rare thing. Crouse's birds have

whiled away the hours in the sunshine, pecking away at clover, grass and turnip tops. The end result — plump, succulent roast goose — is worth the extra time and effort.

Crouse is one of a select number of farmers in Atlantic Canada who still produces free range geese. In the spring, Crouse travels to Fred Shaw's farm in Hantsport to pick up Embden goslings and bring them home to the family's 170-acre farm. There, they live under



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FOOD

lights in the barn until May or June when they move outside to a large, grassy pen with a pond in the centre. The geese fit in nicely at the mixed farm with the Charolais cattle and Christmas trees.

Crouse says his geese are "a gregarious bunch, always eating and swimming together." There is a social order in the pen and one goose always seems to be on guard, waking the others with a honk at any sign of trouble. "You can't sneak up on a goose," says Crouse who obviously enjoys his birds. Geese have been used as sentries as far back as Roman times and are still employed by Scottish distilleries and American junkyards.

All the geese have been spoken for by August, although the orders aren't filled until December. A goose which weighs 20 to 25 pounds live, will weigh about 15 to 20 pounds after cleaning. And as a bonus the customers get the goose liver to make *paté de foie gras*.

With its dark meat and distinctively rich flavour, roast goose is a savoury alternative to turkey. In European countries, it's been served at Christmas dinners for generations. For Canada's early settlers, it was prized not only for the meat: goose down was used in pillows and goose grease for everything from frying food to waterproofing boots for slushy Maritime winters.

Although goose is often compared to turkey, there are some important differences. It serves fewer persons per pound. It also contains a lot more fat and therefore must be prepared differently. Boyd Crouse's mother Fay says, "if the goose isn't fat, it's no good." While the secret to a perfect turkey is frequent basting with fat, much of the fat must be removed from the goose before cooking. Before replacing turkey with goose on your Christmas menu, try it first on your family at a special Sunday dinner.

Fay Crouse recommends covering the goose tightly with foil to ensure a softer texture. In the *Encyclopedia of Canadian Cookery*, Jehane Benoit went a step further — pouring two cups of boiling water over the goose before covering it and then uncovering it during the last 20 minutes of cooking. This method provides lots of pan juices for gravy.

Producers of free range geese are scattered throughout Atlantic Canada. To locate a producer in your neighbourhood, contact your provincial government's poultry specialist.

Roast goose

8-10 lb. goose
½ fresh lemon
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Rinse the goose under cold running water. Drain and pat dry. Pull out all of the fat inside body cavity. Rub lemon inside and out. Stuff and sew or skewer cavity closed. Place goose on a rack in

roasting pan. Prick skin all over to release fat during roasting. Do not baste.

Cover and bake at 325°F for 3 to 3½ hours (20 to 25 minutes per pound) until an internal temperature of 185°F is reached. During roasting, remove fat from the pan every 20 minutes with a spoon or turkey baster. Remove cover for last 30 minutes of roasting time. Yields six to eight servings.

Traditional sauerkraut stuffing

¼ cup butter or bacon fat
1 onion
1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms
2 cups drained rinsed sauerkraut
1 apple
1 tbsp. brown sugar
¼ tsp. caraway seed
freshly ground pepper to taste

In a large stainless or enamel skillet, melt butter or bacon fat. Finely dice onion and sauté until transparent. Add mushrooms, cooking until wilted. Finely mince sauerkraut and add it to skillet, browning for 3 to 4 minutes. Core, peel and dice apple. Remove the skillet from heat and stir in apple, brown sugar, caraway seed and pepper. This recipe makes three cups, enough for a six pound bird.

Oyster stuffing

¼ cup butter
1 onion
1 rib celery
½ carrot
3 cups cubed fresh bread
½ tsp. sage
½ tsp. summer savoury
2 tbsp. snipped fresh parsley
1 tsp. grated lemon rind
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1-2 cups cooked or canned oysters, drained

In large skillet, melt butter over medium-low heat. Mince onion, celery and carrot. Add to skillet and sauté until onion is transparent. In large bowl, toss bread cubes with sage, summer savoury, parsley, lemon rind, salt and pepper. Stir in onion mixture and oysters. Makes four to five cups.

Cranapple sauce

1 cup fresh whole cranberries
½ cup water
2 apples, peeled, cored and coarsely chopped
½ cup currants
1 to 2 tbsp. white sugar

Place all ingredients in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until soft. Stir until smooth. Serve hot or cold.

To make in a microwave oven, place all ingredients in a four-cup microproof glass bowl. Cover with plastic wrap. Cook on high for four or five minutes, stirring half way through. Stir until smooth. ☐

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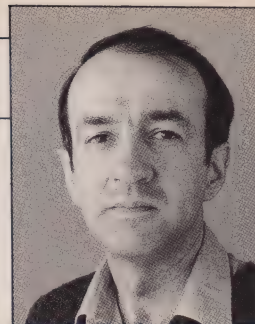
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The dark flowering of a city

Back in September a woman was brutally murdered in the parking garage of a Halifax apartment building in what appears to have been a wanton act of violence. At about the same time children were finding used hypodermic needles in their playgrounds in a housing area known as "The Well" — a notorious hangout for drug pushers and users. The woman who blew the whistle, a single mother, had to move out for her family's safety.

These events rattled around in the media for a few days then died, the public's sense of shock quickly overcome. After all, you become inured and learn to recover quickly in anticipation of the next outrage when you live in one of Canada's most crime-ridden cities.

How's that? you ask, perhaps astonished. *One of Canada's most crime-ridden cities?* Surely a mistake.

Statistics Canada shows the crime rate in Halifax for 1986 and '87 at about 20,000 crimes per 100,000 inhabitants. There have been sharp increases over the last couple of years, especially in break-and-enters. The national crime rate, by comparison, is about 12,000 crimes per 100,000. Montreal and Toronto and most other central Canadian cities are at about that. So are Moncton and Fredericton. Most other East Coast cities and communities are much lower, in keeping with Atlantic Canada's general stature as the lowest crime area in Canada. The crime rate increases as one moves west, from the lowest in Newfoundland (7,544 in 1986) to the highest in British Columbia (16,000).

The worm in the apple on the low-crime East Coast, then, is that rising metropolitan jewel, Halifax. It's true that crime figures can sometimes be misleading because they depend on a lot of variables. The Halifax figures, for example, are for the City of Halifax which has less than half the population of the metropolitan area. But when the suburban figures are added they give little cause for cheer. The Town of Bedford's statistics are almost as high as those of the city and Dartmouth's are slightly above the national average.

At any rate, there's no need to belabour the statistics. Anyone living in and around Halifax is aware of the break-ins, drugs, wanton violence and whatnot around them, although they might be surprised to know that it's actually worse per capita than in the pagan metropoli of central Canada, presumed to be par-

ticularly depraved. Most citizens in the Halifax-Dartmouth metropolitan area probably have niggling in their recent memory some particular sensational outrage, like the woman's murder in the apartment garage, or perhaps something smaller, but chilling nonetheless, in their own neighbourhoods. I have. In my general area east of Dartmouth there have been two drug-related executions since last winter in which young men were methodically killed with a bullet to the head in quiet wooded areas. The drug trade has reached that level of organization. Closer to home, last Christmas season two young teenagers, a boy and a girl, were walking along a quiet suburban street when they were set upon for no apparent reason by two men, strangers, who got out of a car. The boy was beaten senseless, his jaw broken.

This sudden dark flowering has happened quickly, in about ten years. Back in 1982 I wrote an article for the now

Crime: the leading edge of an eroding community

defunct *Quest* magazine on crime in Canada. I found that crime was on a sharp increase all over Canada, but I had twiggled onto the subject by what was happening in Halifax. Until then presumptions about crime by Haligonians were what they had mostly been in the rest of Atlantic Canada for a long time: that crime was a lapse of common sense, the occasional specific tragedy which rippled wide and brought dismay to family and community.

Then all of a sudden, about 1981, they started coming in daily bunches — a half dozen break-ins, three or four robberies, several assaults and so on. Public attention got a final rivetting when a middle class teenager, part of a group that was casually rifling a house, was shot dead by a suburban homeowner.

Things did calm down a bit for a while. In fact the crime rate throughout

Canada levelled off for several years from about 1982 to 1985, only to rise again since then. But what I find now in Halifax is that crimes that used to make the front page, or at least a substantial news page, a decade ago — a paperboy being relieved of his collection at knifepoint, for example — get lumped into "police reports" and the like, if they're reported at all.

It's a little bit reminiscent of the weekend murder roundups in the papers of big American cities — in small print on the back pages.

Of course what we're talking about in Halifax is light years away from that. Or is it? Back in the late 1950s, when I was in high school, I vividly recall reading an article that shocked me. It was about New York City schools. Some students were taking drugs. There were even characters who sold the stuff on the very grounds of some schools! In my innocence I believed that reason would sooner or later prevail; that there would be a revulsion against this, that the miscreants would see the error of their ways, and so on. I would surely have gone into manic depression had I known that within a generation the same thing would be happening at my own school in the rural Maritimes.

No, in fact we are not light years away from the decaying centres of the empire — New York, Washington — under whose media-borne influence we increasingly live. The high crime rate in Halifax is simply the leading edge of the progressive loss of a certain Atlantic Canadian innocence. The strong human relationships which gave cohesion to communities and kept society intact on the East Coast through a hundred years of tough times are eroding. The Halifax metropolitan area has a third of a million people and it's growing. It's getting a bit of economic heft. It has hot entertainment. It's a centre of services, finances, distribution and so forth for the Atlantic area — in short, it's a metropolis although still far smaller than other cities which are not.

This all sounds like the stuff of celebration, not the cause of complaint. The dark side, however, is that the bigger the city gets, the more the sense of community recedes, the more vulnerable it becomes to the modern seductions and pseudo values which are the mark of the decline of American-led western society — a decline which can be measured, among other ways, by its increasing crime rate.

WINTER

Outdoors



A winter sport that's blazing a path cross-country

As well as offering spectacular scenery, Nordic skiers say their sport is great exercise and cheaper than a trip south

by Gord Follett

For more than 40 years, ice skates were the Christmas dream of almost every boy and girl in Atlantic Canada. Toy guns and dolls were fine but secondary. Beginning in the 1930s, skates were a must and, in many cases, proved to be the most used and appreciated gift children received. Then something changed all that. In the mid '70s a new

trend hit the eastern region and, with it, a longer, sleeker piece of winter recreational equipment.

In the years since then, cross-country or Nordic skiing has become one of the most popular forms of recreation in existence and has been tagged by health experts as one of the best means of exercise there is.

Officials say the number of unrecord-

ed cross-country skiers greatly outnumber those registered with clubs throughout the region. In Newfoundland, for example, the provincial association estimates that more than 75,000 people have cross-country ski equipment which they use at least once a year, while only 1,700 officially belong to a club. "And that 75,000 is a very conservative estimate," says provincial coach Bruce Ploughman.

In Nova Scotia, 500 registered members make up a mere fraction of the 70,000 who hit the trails during the relatively short season which runs from early January until late March, depending, of course, on weather conditions. Prince Edward Islanders are usually favoured with a little more snow so that skiers are out from mid-December until sometime in April. In some areas of Labrador, however, the season can stretch



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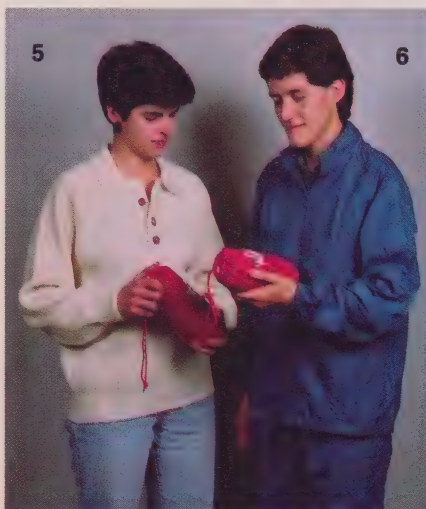
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WINTER OUTDOORS



MICHAEL OREAGEN

course, it's a tremendous form of exercise where you can go at your own pace. Besides being cheaper than hockey, with cross-country skiing there are no 5:30 a.m. practices. It's also a way for families to enjoy winter together without having to travel to Florida."

Unlike sports in which the only scenery is AstroTurf, most cross-country ski trails offer a spectacular view of the surrounding countryside. The Koch Trail in Labrador City and the Cape North trail in Cape Breton — site of the 1989 Canadian Junior Championships from Feb. 3 to 8 — are considered among the best such courses in North America. While offering a challenge to competitive skiers, these trails also provide breathtaking scenery.

Ploughman says the Cape North trail "is as close to perfect as you can get — very scenic yet challenging, an ideal course." He says it's competitive with the "well-kept" world class facility in Labrador.

The Old Orchard Inn in Wolfville, N.S., while not as scenic as some, is the most popular spot on the Nova Scotian circuit with its ski touring centre. Ski Wentworth, between Truro and Amherst, N.S., also ranks with the region's best.

The Blow Me Down trails in Newfoundland's Corner Brook mountain range, according to Ploughman, are also



MICHAEL OREAGEN

Halifax skiers use Point Pleasant Park beautiful. "Plus, there's a tremendous course near Clarendville that overlooks the bay. The Avalon wilderness area (although there are no cut trails) and the Gander-Glenwood area also offer very scenic routes. They're a pleasure to ski on. And it wouldn't be out of the ordinary to see a rabbit, moose, caribou or weasel

New Brunswick's Kings Landing is popular from late October until mid-May. New Brunswick mountain trails also boast longer seasons. Many clubs in Atlantic Canada stage meets or tours virtually every weekend during the season.

Ike Whitehead of Nordic Ski Nova Scotia attributes the popularity of this Olympic sport to the fact that "we *do* have winter here and people are looking for a way to get out. It's relatively inexpensive and it's a very special sport. Even though we cross-country skiers are sometimes looked at as granola heads, I like to socialize when I go cross-country skiing. It's a family sport and that's another reason why it's so attractive. According to Statistics Canada and Canadian Ski Council figures, there are more cross-country skiers than Alpine skiers in Atlantic Canada."

While it's uncertain whether cross-country skiing was introduced to Canada by Scandinavian immigrants or whether it was already being practised here by native Indians, it's only in recent years that it was accepted by a larger population. "In the early '70s there was a major symposium in Ottawa and that was sort of the kick-off," says Whitehead. "There was cross-country skiing in certain areas during the '50s and '60s but I would think that the early-to-mid '70s is when it really started to roll."

Bruce Ploughman believes there are several reasons why cross-country skiing has attracted both competitive and recreational participants.

"In Newfoundland, particularly over the past eight or 10 years, there has been a greater focus on it by the world press. Then you have the national heroes, like Pierre Harvey of Quebec." Ploughman says the Jack Rabbit programs for children between the ages of seven and 13 have proven very popular. "And, of

MARBLE MOUNTAIN



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3. Recipe must be original or one you have adapted.



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4. Entry must state appropriate food category (see categories listed).
5. Please supply imperial measurements.
6. All entries become the property of Insight Publishing Limited and will not be returned. We may modify entries as appropriate for publication.
7. Recipe must not contain brand names.
8. Entries should be postmarked no later than February 1, 1989.
9. Enter as many recipes as you wish. Each recipe must be accompanied by a separate entry form or facsimile for eligibility.
10. Decision of the judges is final.
11. Contest is open to any Canadian resident, except employees of Insight Publishing Limited, or sponsors of the contest and their employees.
12. Each entry must be signed by he/she grants Insight Publishing Limited the right to publish recipe without compensation.
13. Recipes must be submitted along with entry form, legibly written, printed or preferably typed (double spaced) on white 8 1/2 x 11" paper.

14. Contestants must be willing to participate in promotional events relating to the contest.

15. Contestants submitting recipes in the jams, jellies, preserves and pickles category must have samples available if requested.

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WINTER OUTDOORS



COURTESY OF N.B. TOURISM

Cross-country skiing is offering families a healthy way to enjoy winter together as you're going along."

Popular areas in New Brunswick include Campbellton, with 70 kilometres of marked and groomed trails, and Charlo, with 33 km. The provincial government's new winter guide lists 31 cross-country ski clubs in New Brunswick, more than half of them in northern New Brunswick and the rest scattered outside Saint John, Moncton and Fredericton.

In Prince Edward Island, scenic trails may be found in the Mill River, Brookvale and Brudenell provincial parks and in the National Park on the north shore. Ulysse Robichaud, chairman of the P.E.I. Cross-Country Ski Association, says Cavendish is becoming one of the most popular areas because of its ocean view and rolling terrain. A new area, Ocean Park, was opened in North Rustico last year and combines Nordic skiing with skating and tobogganing.

Ploughman's advice for those who have yet to don skis this season is "moderation and progression. Don't try to go 110 kilometres the first day. Take your time and feel comfortable with the amount you are doing."

The best way for novices to get involved is to contact a local Nordic ski club or provincial association. Ploughman, a 27-year-old former Atlantic racing champion, says these associations can do much

more than give basic registration information. They will eagerly pass on their knowledge about trails, equipment and beginner and upgrading courses.

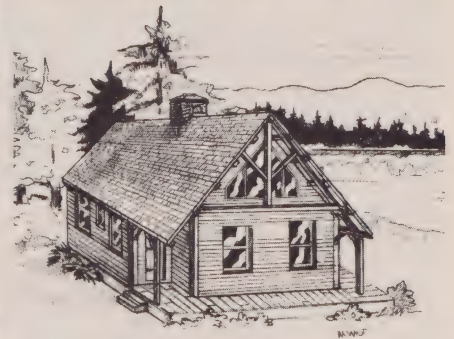
Equipment costs in the Atlantic region run from \$99 for bottom-of-the-line packages with skis, poles, boots and bindings, to more than \$1,500 for top brand racing gear, which also includes racing and warm-up suits, specially-designed underwear, ear muffs, hats and goggles.

All four provinces offer various levels of CANSI (Canadian Association for Nordic Ski Instruction) and National Coaching Certification Program courses, as well as those for tour leaders and beginners. Courses are held through individual clubs, provincial associations or area recreation departments, usually as often as the demand warrants.

Although competitive cross-country skiing in Atlantic Canada is still small scale in comparison to the recreational side, the racing aspect remains key to its growing popularity.

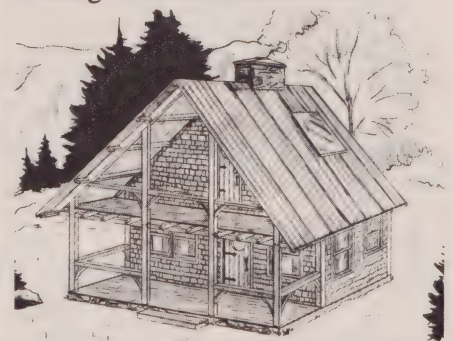
"The Atlantic Provinces may not win as many medals as the rest of Canada," says Whitehead, "but when you have coaches like Bruce Ploughman, Pierre Roy (in Nova Scotia) and Bob McGrath (in New Brunswick), I think we're pulling our weight as far as building the sport is concerned."

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PHOTOS BY ARTIE IRWIN

Night skiing, now in effect at 10 ski hills in Atlantic Canada, gives working people the chance to try out a few trails at night

Atlantic ski hills powdered with as much money as snow

With such extensive upgrading of ski hills in the region, it's no wonder 61,000 households are warming up for the season

It's staggering the dollars that have been poured into ski hills in Atlantic Canada over the last few years — \$6.6 million for the new White Hills ski resort in Clarendville, Nfld., more than \$2.5 million at Wentworth, N.S. since 1986, \$2 million at New Brunswick's Mont Farlagne. And there's more.

At Martock near Windsor, N.S., owner Joe O'Brien has spent \$3 million since 1985 to make the most of his 600 foot hill. As well as night skiing, a quad chairlift, a new grooming machine and an improved rental facility, skiers can now also take advantage of such "hot fads" as snowboards, video analysis of their skiing and telemark lessons. Other improvements include a full-time ranger patrol which keeps tabs on that "out of control bomber who ruins the day for 10 other skiers."

Another \$3 million is being spent at Marble Mountain, near Corner Brook, Nfld., which recently became a provincial Crown corporation. With the longest run in Atlantic Canada (two miles), the addition of snowmaking and a quad chairlift and available helicopter skiing at nearby Blomidon Mountain, manager Dave LeDrew is optimistic about the 1988-'89 season.

Ben Eoin, near Sydney, N.S., has recently announced a \$400,000 upgrading project, the first phase of which will include new snowmaking and grooming equipment and expanded base facilities. General manager Kevin MacInnis says, "skiing here has become very service-oriented and a big business."

There's no doubt that all this spending has made a difference. Of the region's 16 ski hills, 11 now have double, triple

or quad chairlifts, 10 have lights for night skiing and 11 have snowmaking equipment. New trails are being cut so quickly that even the ski hill operators have a hard time keeping a tally. Many lodges and ski rental shops are also getting a facelift.

From the skiers' point of view, although no hill is perfect, each has something to recommend it. Carol Buchanan says she and her friends decided to drive from Halifax to New Brunswick's 660 foot Poley Mountain (where \$2 million has been spent since 1987) last Christmas because they knew they could count on snow. Sugarloaf, in Campbellton, N.B. has outdoor skating rinks and a sliding hill for youngsters who have tired of their skis. One former ski patroller says that although Cape Smokey in Cape Breton, N.S. has too few trails and too many lineups, the view of the ocean is fabulous and the ski school program excellent. Skiers recommend another Smokey, in Labrador City, because it has the longest skiing season in the region. Even local skiers at Brookvale, P.E.I., Twin Oaks in Middleton, N.S. and Silverwood and McGaw Hill in New Brunswick say it's nice to have a hill in the area, even if its vertical drop is 305 feet or less.

The most common complaint about

ski hills in the Atlantic Provinces is the long lift lineups, especially during the weekend. At Marble Mountain, for example, David Seviour of St. John's says it's not uncommon "to wait a half hour or more to get on the chairlift and, by the time you get to the top, you're so stiff with cold you can hardly ski."

Gary MacDonald of New Glasgow describes the recent expenditures on the region's ski hills as more a necessity than a luxury. The former ski patroller at Keppoch near Antigonish, N.S. says that, until recently, "too many people on too few hills" were taking the fun out of the sport. Night lights and chairlifts are making a difference even though "Keppoch, Mar- tock and Wentworth had problems with their chairs last year. That was to be expected—they had to work out the bugs."

MacDonald believes the key to skiing in this region is making the most of what you've got. "It's nice to go to the American hills but most people can't afford to go there every weekend." Although Keppoch has a base elevation of only 480 feet, MacDonald loves it, describing it as "the best practice hill in Eastern Canada. Its beginner hill runs around the side of the mountain, it's fairly quiet and very friendly."

Bedford, N.S. resident Esvela Newton and her family have skied throughout New England, at Quebec's Mont Ste-Anne and Whistler in British Columbia. But it's at Wentworth that they spend most of their skiing hours. "We go away to ski a more challenging hill. But even at Whistler we don't usually ski top to bottom but rather the first half of the mountain. Some of these trails are no longer than Wentworth even if they're more challenging."

Wentworth has a lot going for it, Newton says, including two challenging runs, 27 trails to choose from, snowmaking on 65 per cent of the hill, lights for night skiing and a quad chairlift. Although members of her family enjoy coming here to ski from Ottawa, they find that Wentworth and other Atlantic hills lack the restaurants, lounges and resort accommodations which are common in Ontario.

Halifax dentist Dr. George Clark, who's been skiing for more than 20

years, agrees about the lack of facilities. "If there were more nice places to stay it would attract people to stay for a few days during the week."

Clark and his family get the most out of the ski season by combining skiing in Nova Scotia with an occasional trip to Quebec or New England. He's also thrilled with the introduction of chairlifts because they're "easier on the old legs."

The motivation for all of this spending has not just been to keep veteran Atlantic Canadian skiers here and happy. It's

also been to attract more people to the sport and, obviously, it has. According to Stats Canada, there are now skis in 61,000 households in the region, 79 per cent more than in 1980.

Although skiing is touted as being a sport for the wealthy, it doesn't have to be. It's easy to spend \$500 or more for a pair of boots or skis but it's also possible to buy a package with skis, boots, bindings and poles for less than \$200. Lift passes for adults average \$20 a day and rentals \$16.

An even better deal for new skiers is the "Skiing is Believing" program, which introduced 11,000 people in Nova

Scotia and New Brunswick to the sport for \$15 each last year. The program, which is also available in Newfoundland this year, includes rental equipment, lift privileges and a beginner lesson from a professional instructor.

The hospitality industry is also getting involved with travel and accommodations deals for skiers. Air Nova now offers ski packages to Marble and Crabbe and Air Atlantic to Marble, Crabbe and Keltic. Acadian Lines has daily service to Wentworth from Halifax, Truro and New Glasgow with a special rate on lift tickets while Crabbe offers bus service from Fredericton on weekends.

With the millions of dollars being spent to make the most of the region's hills and an increasing number of programs and deals available each year, it's no wonder that international ski industry gurus have named the Maritimes the fastest growing ski area in North America. When a long, cold winter is an unavoidable fact of life, there's no better way to spend it than skiing, says Newton. "When you ski you find yourself saying, 'where has the winter gone?'"



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MICHAEL GREIGEN

Recalling icy winter days on ponds and backyard rinks

For Rob McCall, Errol Thompson and other skating pros, a frozen lake or pair of racers evokes fond memories

by John Wishart

The young blond boy mugs for the camera as he whirls around the backyard rink on spindly legs, his hands clutched tightly around a hockey stick. His enthusiasm filters through the brittle, black and white homemovie.

This scene has been repeated again and again on patches of ice throughout Atlantic Canada. Almost everyone has memories of trying out new racers on the frog pond, sweeping snow off the lake for a game of hockey or patiently watering that tiny backyard rink in anticipation of winter's nightly freeze. Atlantic Canadian skating pros — hockey players, figure skaters and speedskaters — have their share of fond childhood memories of days spent on barren stretches of riverbed, ankles turned inward, red noses running, toes and fingers numb from the cold.

For Robert McCall, the spark to his international figure skating career came — literally — on a stretch of pavement that separated two of the many lakes in his hometown of Dartmouth, N.S. McCall, who captured bronze medals at the Calgary Olympics and 1988 World Championships with ice dancing partner

Tracy Wilson, remembers the sparks flying as he tiptoed on skates across the pavement because a channel linking the two lakes didn't freeze.

"Growing up in Dartmouth provided a wonderful opportunity to skate outdoors," McCall reminisces. "Later in my career, I think it enhanced the love I had for skating...and that's why I've been able to keep at it for so long." McCall and Wilson are still going strong, performing with a series of professional skating tours in Canada and the United States.

"Rob was always a real daredevil," says his mother Evelyn. During weekend family skates on Lake Micmac or Lake Banook, "Rob would be doing all these jumps. We thought he was going to go right through the ice," she laughs. Mrs. McCall, who skated with the Ice Capades from 1956 to 1958, would sometimes worry about her son's ice acrobatics. "I'd be at one end of the ice teaching a group of kids and he'd be doing these axels and things way ahead of his age group, falling down and knocking the wind out of himself. But he always bounced back."

A generation earlier, she remembers

skating at an outdoor rink created by local firefighters in a Dartmouth park. "A band would be playing, there'd be hot french fries, hot chocolate and maybe a pot-belly stove at one end with Christmas lights strung across the ice."

Harry Smyth's skating memories go back even further. Smyth, of Moncton, N.B., was world junior speedskating champion in 1926, a year in which he went undefeated as a 16-year-old in several international competitions. Smyth's father, Charles, who also trained world amateur champion Charles Gorman of Saint John, used to take his son to Hall's Creek Marsh on what was then the outskirts of Moncton.

Smyth said it was difficult to go too fast on the marsh because you had to wear so many layers of clothes to protect yourself from the raw winter winds. "But I liked it outdoors," Smyth recalls with a grin. "Indoors, it's tricky. If you don't play your corners right, someone will get past you." The pinnacle of Smyth's skating career came on an outdoor surface at Lily Lake in Saint John, site of the 1926 World Championships. "That was beautiful ice," he recalls wistfully.

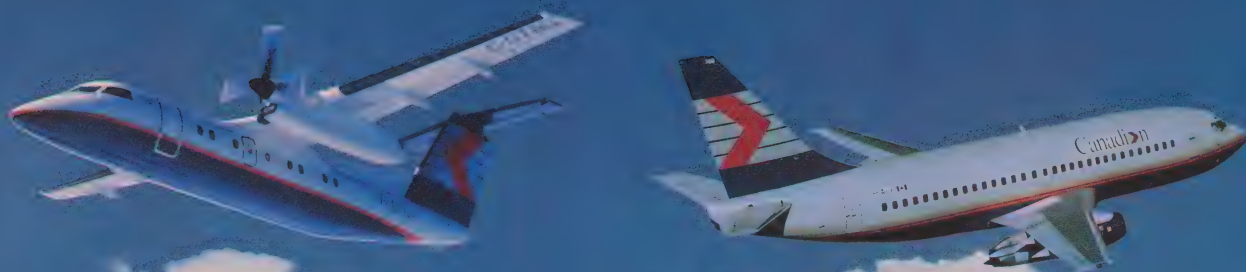
Errol Thompson, of Summerside, P.E.I., may not have been as fleet-of-foot as Smyth in his heyday, but he could put the puck in the net. Thompson was typical of most Island boys — he loved hockey. "There used to be a farmer's field that had ice in it and there was a lagoon down the road. All I really remember is putting frozen feet in frozen skates and then into frozen boots."

Thompson went on to play nine seasons in the National Hockey League, compiling 393 points before retiring from the professional ranks in 1981. When he returned to the Island to start a new



COURTESY OF EVELYN MCCALL

McCall started skating at an early age



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career, Thompson said he didn't see many pick-up "river games" anymore.

Al MacAdam knows why. A fellow Islander who played 12 seasons with five different NHL clubs, MacAdam says times have changed since he and Thompson were youngsters. "It's more organized now. It's tough to find unsupervised ice time." As coach of the St. Thomas University hockey team in Fredericton, MacAdam has a chance to see a new generation of young men approach the

game. He thinks there's a difference. "They love playing the game as much as we did and there's the same intensity level during the games, but they've got a lot of other interests too. Their goals seem more short-term."

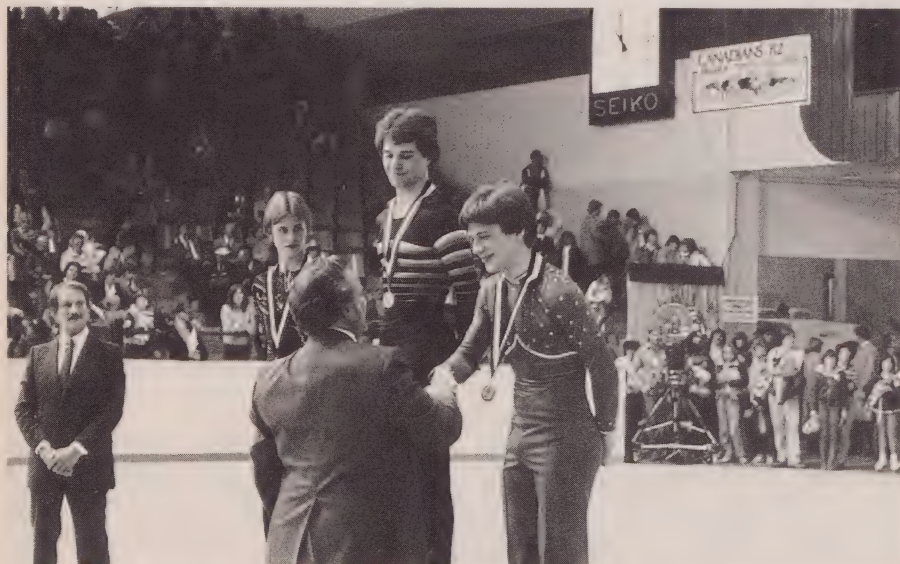
Billy and Bob MacMillan have seen the love of skating change too. The Charlottetown brothers had a combined 18 years in the NHL, racking up more than 700 points between them. It all started on a backyard rink their father

made that became known in the neighbourhood as the MacMillan Pond. "We were out there every day," Billy says. "Three times a day — recess, noonhour and after school," adds Bob.

In those days the weak skaters played alongside the more skilled kids, says Billy, who started skating at age seven. "Today, kids are called all-stars at such an early age. That's what's destroying the game. At age eight or nine when they try out for a so-called elite team, kids are told they're not good enough...the attitude has changed from participation to winning and it's the fault of the governing sports bodies in the provinces."

André Bourgeois sees a parallel in figure skating. The Dieppe, N.B. native, now studying at Dalhousie University, placed second in Skate Prague in 1982 and rose to fourth overall among senior men at the 1985 Canadian Championships. In his international skating career, Bourgeois says he's seen many skaters sacrifice too much, including their education, for the slim hope of making it big. What's missing, he says, is that skating should be fun as well as competitive.

For the thousands of Atlantic Canadians who grew up on those frozen ponds and backyard rinks, it's the fun they remember. In that more innocent age, the pleasure of racing down a lonely stretch of ice seemed enough. "We were always hungry and cold," Billy MacMillan says, "but we loved the game."



André Bourgeois received a bronze medal at the 1982 Canadian Junior Championships

COURTESY OF ANDRÉ BOURGEOIS



PHOTOS BY ROSEMARY CURLEY

Winter brings out Island's binocular-wielding birders

Birdwatching no longer conjures up images of eccentric individuals gingerly making their way over hill and dale

by Marcia Porter

Armed with their binoculars and field guides, Prince Edward Island birders head for the great outdoors. It's December and the air is nippy but these nature buffs are hearty. Besides, the group of 25 is on a mission. This is the annual Christmas Bird Count, a highlight of the winter bird watching season.

Charlottetown native Norah Longworth, who's in her early 80s, is a regular bird count participant. "We have a great time," says an energetic Norah, who participates despite her poor vision. At mid morning, she shares her sherry-laced consommé with fellow birders.

"I haven't missed one in 15 years," says Rosemary Curley, an avid birder. "There are Christmas treats — you end up exchanging Christmas baking." Although the count sometimes deteriorates into an eating session, she says its scientific value is not to be overlooked.

The birders comb an area near Charlottetown, trying to locate bird species and numbers. A second group covers the National Park. Results from the counts, both sponsored by the Natural History Society, are tallied by count co-ordinators and sent off to the National Audubon Society for publication in the longest-running bird census in Canada.

"The information can point to long term trends in bird population," says Curley. And though the information compiled is serious in nature, the counts are fun for both the expert and novice birder.

Dan McAskill, another self-proclaimed nature enthusiast, agrees. "We combine inexperienced and experienced people." Winter is well-suited to novices, he says, because there are fewer birds to see and the ones that do winter here are distinct species.

Birding is said to be the fastest



A song sparrow enjoys a feed of seed

growing hobby around. Islander Geoff Hogan offers a simple explanation for the phenomenon — "the environmental movement has helped open people's eyes to nature." He says the stereotype of the birder presented in movies and books is not accurate. "They're all ages and all walks of life," he says. "You cannot peg who they are."

Hogan's own love of bird life prompted him to open the Bird's Eye store in downtown Charlottetown. It smells of potpourri and carries racks of magazines and books devoted to birds with a selection of ultra-modern birdfeeders near the back of the store. Hogan says many of the people who pull on winter woollens, grab binoculars and take to the snow-covered fields started their hobbies from their own backyard birdfeeders.

It's a simple way to learn bird identification, says Curley. "And your physical comfort is exceedingly high."

A supply of sunflower seeds and suet keep the feathered creatures coming back. This year, winter feeders are expected to attract a wide variety of seed-eating birds like blue jays, evening grosbeaks and chickadees. Because cone-bearing trees throughout the Maritimes are producing particularly heavy crops this year, birders are also expecting large numbers of finches. Curley says to watch for white-winged crossbills and pine siskins.

Winter birdfeeding can become an addictive activity and, when armchair athletes decide they need to know more, they sign up for Geoff Hogan's class on bird identification. Offered every fall, the seven-week course is always filled. Wendy Druet, of Charlottetown, took the

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WINTER OUTDOORS

course to learn how to distinguish between different species. "We've always had a bird feeder in every house we've lived in," says Druet. "We have a small yard but we get a lot of activity."

Ardeth Smith of York Point considers herself a nature buff. "I've had a long standing interest in wildlife. And I've developed more and more of an interest in birds. Once I even got up at 4 a.m., took my binoculars and went bird-watching." Like the other students, Smith signed up to learn more about bird identification.

Groups of Islanders dedicated to wildlife and the bird world are forming all over the Island. The most recognized and longest running organization is the Natural History Society with about 200 members. The society was established more than 90 years ago to protect Island flora and fauna and to educate people about the natural world. "We hold a monthly meeting designed to educate members and the general public," says Dan McAskill, society vice president. "And a newsletter is distributed to the schools."

Though McAskill stresses the educational focus taken by the organization, the Natural History Society also sometimes takes on a sharper edge. The group is challenging a proposed cottage development on Boughton Island, the site of colonial nesting grounds for many species of birds. Located off the shore of Cardigan in the eastern part of the province, Boughton Island has a large blue heron colony. Developers are hoping to construct a large cottage subdivision which would threaten Island bird life. "We feel it's totally incompatible for the two to exist together," McAskill says.

There are other less controversial groups dedicated to wildlife. A group of Prince County nature buffs joined forces last year to form the Lady Slipper Naturalists. With a membership of about 60, this group invites guest speakers to address them on all aspects of nature. The Lady Slipper Naturalists are also birders who've already organized a number of fields trips. Although they've yet to brave the outdoors in winter, they've had their own unofficial birdcount and discovered 59 different species.

A group of birdlovers in the Montague area have also organized an unofficial winter bird count. Gary Schneider, the man who instigated the event, says, "It's a nice way to get people involved in birding."

Rosemary Curley says that, although the Atlantic region still has its share of avid bird watchers who run from province to province in pursuit of some rare species, that's not what happens in P.E.I. "We tend to be a little less serious, not so ruthlessly single-minded," she says. On the Island, birders are out to relax and enjoy nature year round.

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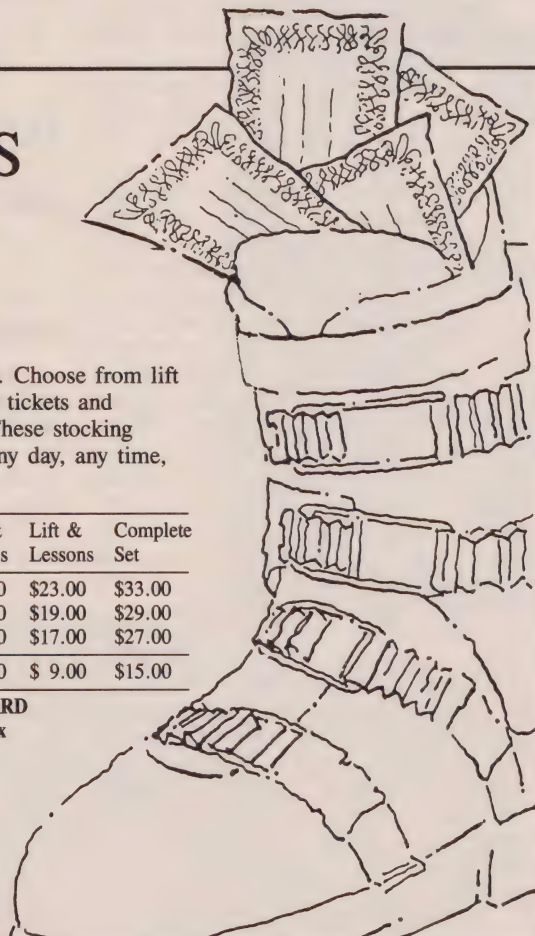
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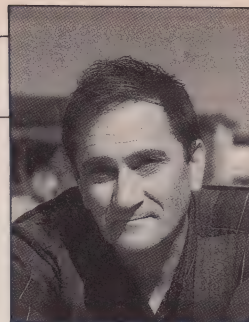
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Mysteries of the wider world

*"When Dick, the shepherd, blows his nail
And milk comes frozen home in pail..."*

That was one tough poem. We struck it in the winter of Grade Eight. I can see now, from this distance, where the heft of the problem lay. We overloaded our fuse boxes by trying to reconcile what was inside the book with what was outside the schoolhouse window.

"What do we mean," the schoolmaster would ask with small hope and for the sake of form, "by 'Dick, the shepherd, blows his nail'?"

It would be three o'clock on a winter's day, cold and bright with the harbour so blue it was almost black and the great humped islands, dusted white, standing in a line down the bay in the direction of Bermuda.

Never mind that, what was Dick, the shepherd, dead and in his grave these 300 years, getting on with when he blew his nail. Was nail-blowing a winter feature of the sheepherding trade back there in Shakespearean times in England?

Snow crunched under the boots of Mr. Hollett as he took a shortcut home past the schoolhouse windows with three brace of rabbits slung over the gun on his shoulder and a pair of rackets, too, on his back or "snowshoes" as they were called in the books.

He stops for a word on the road with Mrs. Brinston on her way to the well with her water buckets and a hoop, a wooden hoop four feet in diameter which kept the water from slopping down your legs.

They both step aside and wave up a hand to Mr. Trowbridge passing by with his horse, Dolly, and his slide-load of firewood with a piece of twisted juniper on top of it to make a new rib for his boat.

At three o'clock on a winter's day the sheep commence. Eight, 10 or a dozen sheep in every meadow bleating by every stable waiting for potato peels and cabbage stumps and their hay to be pulled down. For half an hour the sharp air rang with sheep at their feeding time.

"Well, what do you suppose we mean," the schoolmaster would try again, "by 'Dick, the shepherd, blows his nail'?"

Had a secret poll been taken among the five of us in Grade Eight the majority would have concluded that Dick had only one oar in the water, that he was a few herring short of a barrel and sat there with his prized possession, a three-inch galvanized nail and, child-fashion, pretended to play it like a tin whistle.

Across the schoolhouse in a favoured

place by the pot-bellied stove, one of the Higher Grades who meant well did a dumb show of breathing hard on the tops of his fingers. This was mistaken as some sort of intellectual slur by Wilson Gilbert Peach who sat at the desk ahead of me and he returned an indignant telegraph by sticking out his tongue and tugging hard at the crotch of his trousers. The schoolmaster dismissed it as a mirage. For the sake of his own sanity, this was a thing he often did.

We all knew what a shepherd was, any fool did. A shepherd was a person who had nothing else to do but tend sheep unless he was a woman in which case he was a shepherdess. Shepherds were persons like Little Bo Peep and David who slew Goliath and damn-his-eyes Dick who blew his nail.

"Why" was a different matter. Ten or 12 sheep were plenty even for big families. Why would anybody keep so many sheep that it was one person's lifeswork to tend them?

Overloaded fuse boxes shed no light on the subject

All present tended sheep, from scything hay to killing crows which picked the eyes from half-born lambs, yet we had about as much prospect of growing up to become shepherds as we did of being cowboys like Tom Mix.

We gave Dick and his nail extremely hard thought. Our minds spun like windmills through every possible detail of tending sheep in winter. It was vital, for the safety of the group, to think until you sweat, to guess wildly and desperately. Otherwise, the schoolmaster lost patience and singled out one of the flock and made him stand up and beat him into a slushy puddle by the use of a word like "nail."

What, sir, nail, sir, a simple word like nail. Can you not tell it, can you not spell it, not know nail with only four letters to it like fool?

"Horn," ventured someone quickly to forestall the tirade. The few pictures we'd

seen of shepherds all had horns, curled brassy jobs costing 10 or 12 dollars if a cent. Dick had a horn which he called a nail and he blew it.

"Nose, sir. Sharp, pointy nose like a nail, perhaps. Wintertime and I allow Dick, the shepherd, might have had a nasty dose of that old grout and was on the go. Nose, sir, like a nail, sir, and he blowed it, like you would."

This was chancy stuff but at least he wouldn't (because he couldn't) keep anyone in after school. The fire in the stove was nearly d'outed for the day and the ice candles on the eaves were growing by the inch. It was darkening fast and the kerosene in the lamp was not for to be squandered.

The schoolmaster fired down the book and stamped across to the Grade Fours and gave the poor little brutes so much homework that two of them commenced to snivel on the spot.

We had thought too hard, of course, on the topic of Dick and his nail. It was a nice enough poem. What ruined it were the outlandish words. Buddy seemed to know, in places, what he was talking about. But some of his words put us off our oats. Never mind "nail" it was even worse with "pail."

"And milk comes frozen home..." How cold must be their winters over there in England and how distant their barns. You could milk our old June in the barn every bit of two gunshots away from the house and dawdle back through a blizzard and stop to gather the eggs on the way and the milk still steamed when you put it down in the porch.

But in a pail, the dirty scuts! A pail, God save all, is the thing into which the chamberpots were emptied to be slopped in turn over the cliff with the wind in an uncontrary direction. It was simply too much to think of milk in a pail and not a bucket.

"FINGER nail," whooped the Higher Grades in scorn as we piled out the schoolhouse door. "Dick, the shaggin' shepherd, blowed to his shaggin' finger nail because he was cold, cold, cold...and stunned, stunned like ye bunch of babies."

We pounded them, then, with snowballs until they ran for there were only three of them in the Higher Grades and five of us in Grade Eight and we were joined by the eight in Grade Seven and cheered by the 12 in Grade Six...

But that is mathematics and, excuse me, I have digressed.

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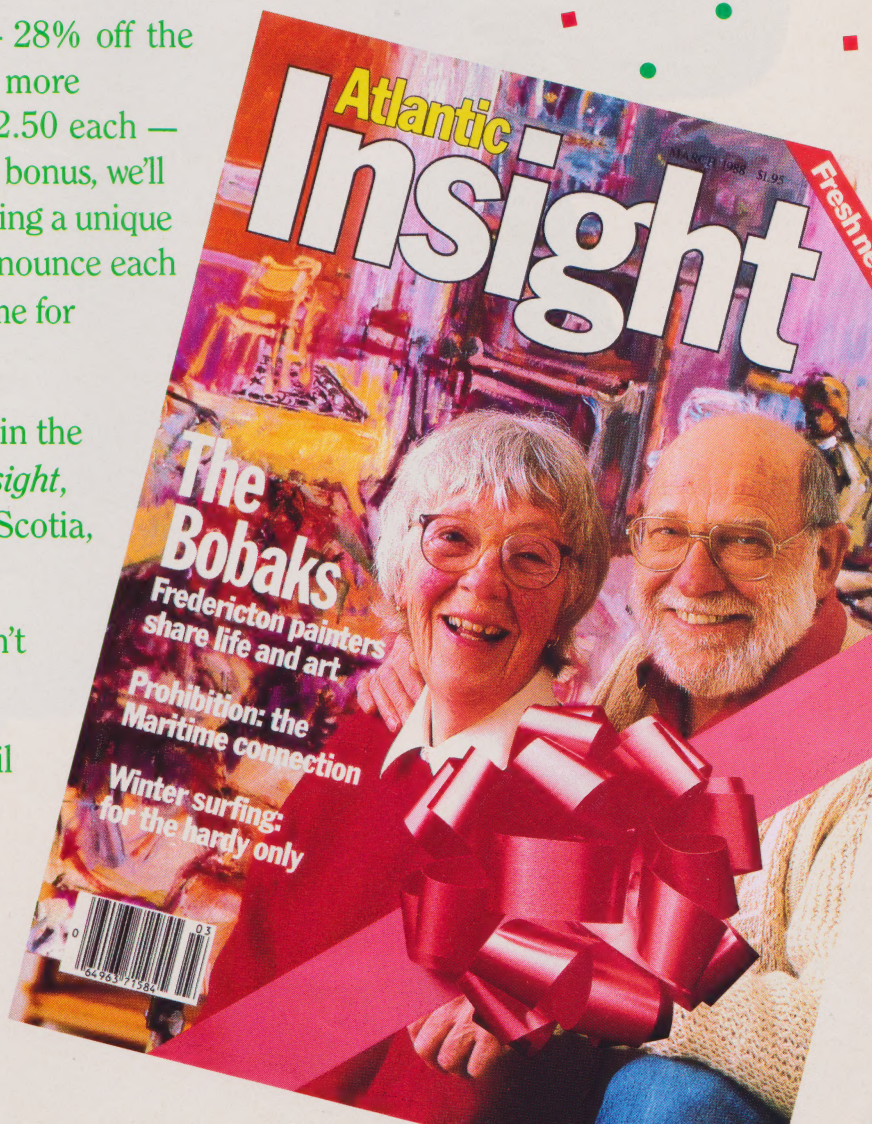
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